

Hipers Illustrated

**TIME SENSITIVE
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Volume 19, No. 8
SEPT. 11, 1999 • \$2.95

Hawk Rock!



A soccer player in a white jersey with the number 9, holding a soccer ball. The player is wearing a white jersey with red and black stripes on the sleeves. The jersey has "FILA" and "Hawkeyes" logos. The player is holding a white soccer ball with black patterns. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

NEBRASKA SOCCER HOME SCHEDULE 1999

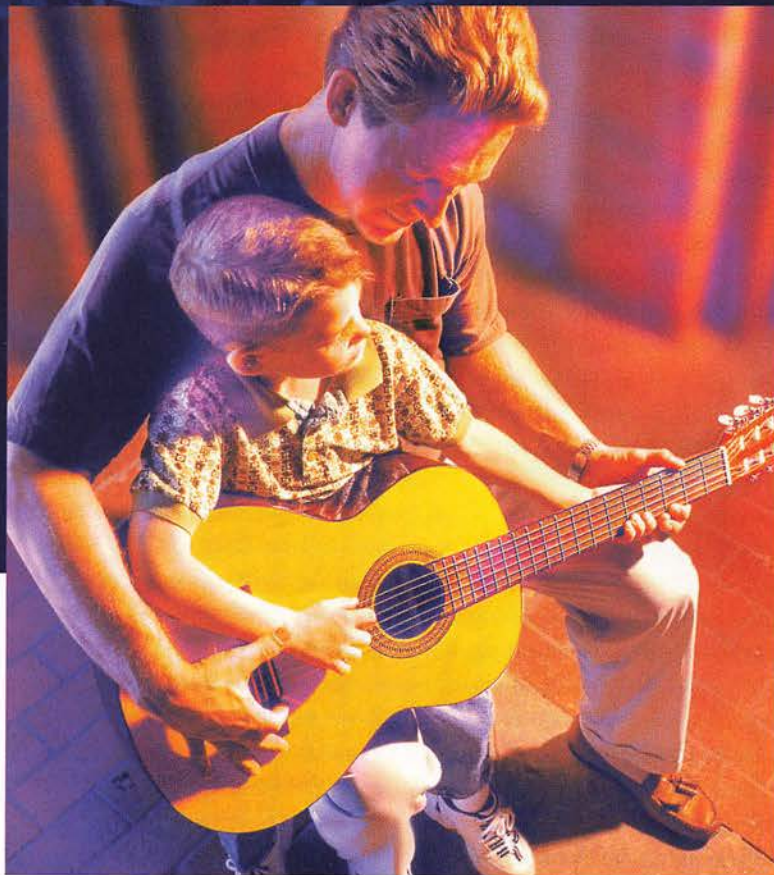
Aug. 20	UNO	7 p.m.
Aug. 27	TEXAS TECH	7 p.m.
Aug. 29	BAYLOR	1 p.m.
Sept. 3	ORAL ROBERTS	7 p.m.
Sept. 10/12	Husker Fila Invitational	
Sept. 10	USC vs. Portland	5 p.m.
	CONNECTICUT	7 p.m.
Sept. 12	USC vs. Connecticut	11 a.m.
	PORTLAND	1 p.m.
Sept. 24	TULSA	7 p.m.
Oct. 8	DENVER	7 p.m.
Oct. 15	KANSAS	7 p.m.
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Oct. 29	IOWA STATE	7 p.m.

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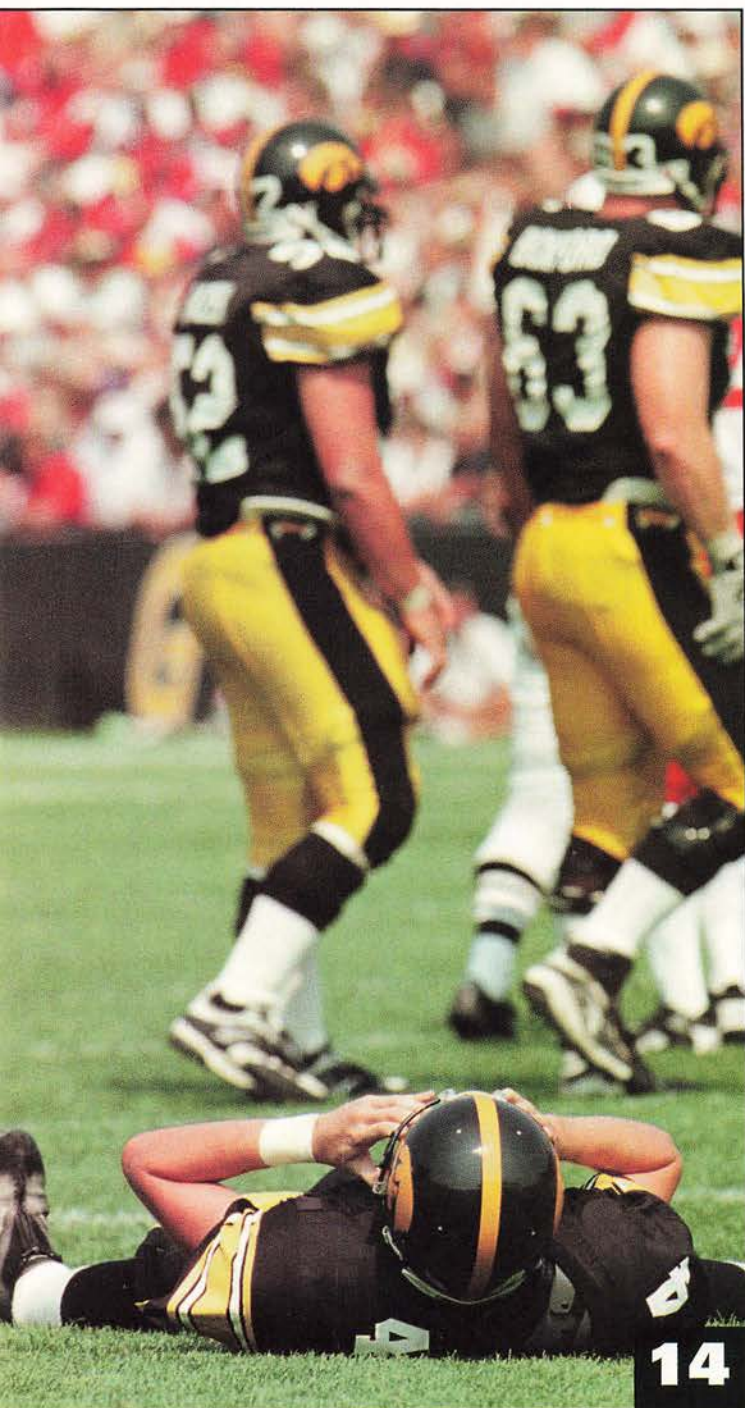
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24 Hawaii Connection

Nebraska's four players from Hawaii are having a hot time in Lincoln. By Mike Babcock

ON THE COVER

Nebraska rover Mike Brown makes a solid hit on an Iowa receiver. Photo by Scott Bruhn

It Wasn't Bad For An Opener

*Two talented quarterbacks
will make it an interesting year*



**Brian
HILL**

OK, SO IT TOOK half a game to get the kinks worked out.

The first two quarters weren't pretty, but a 42-7 victory over Iowa to open the season wasn't really half bad.

It was certainly a better defensive performance than a year ago, when Louisiana Tech wide receiver Troy Edwards set an NCAA record with 405 yards from 21 catches and quarterback Tim Rattay riddled the Blackshirts for 590 yards passing. In that game, Nebraska found itself leading just 35-21 midway through the third quarter before pulling away for a 56-27 victory in Lincoln.

Granted, Iowa didn't have Edwards and Rattay, but the Hawkeyes are a member of the conference we hear so much about and do have some fine athletes. It'll be interesting to see how their season progresses, starting with this week's intrastate battle at Iowa State.

Nebraska, opening on the road for the first time since 1995, appeared to answer some of its questions.

The rushing game, which slipped to an average of 253.8 yards per game in 1998, produced 347 yards. And the 543 yards in total offense was just 2 fewer than last season's high of 545 against Kansas.

Quarterback Bobby Newcombe and I-backs DeAngelo Evans and Dan Alexander, who missed large chunks of last season because of injuries, appeared to be back at full speed. Newcombe struggled early with three first-half turnovers but came on to rush for two touchdowns and pass for a third.

The quarterback competition — some prefer to call it a controversy — will obviously continue. Backup Eric Crouch played well, scoring

Nebraska's only first-half touchdown and rushing for two more in the second half. Crouch was disappointed when he wasn't named the starter, but that shouldn't surprise anyone. These guys are tremendous competitors, and both want to play. Both made significant contributions in the opener. They were in the lineup at the same time on at least two occasions — Crouch lined up at wide receiver, faking a reverse on one of the plays — and that should give opposing coaches one more thing to think about.

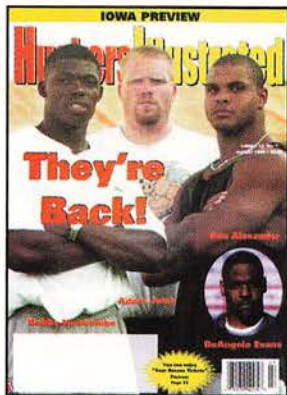
Speaking of contributions, it's always interesting early in a season to see which young players will play key roles.

One of the youngest is 17-year-old true freshman Toni Fonoti, who came to Nebraska from Hauula, Hawaii. The 6-foot-4, 330-pound Fonoti has worked his way up to No. 2 on the depth chart at left guard and played considerably against Iowa.

Fonoti is only the third Cornhusker offensive lineman in the modern era to play as a first-year freshman. The others were center Jake Young (1986) and guard Will Shields (1989).

Fonoti is one of four players from Hawaii on the 1999 squad, joining starting sophomore center Dominic Raiola, freshman defensive lineman Junior Tagoa'i and sophomore linebacker Tony Tata. Contributing editor Mike Babcock provides an interesting look at the four players from the 50th state and their recruitment on Page 24 of this issue.

Aloha. ■



Got Something To Say?

Please send your comments and questions to: Letters, 3210 NW 3rd St., Lincoln, Neb. 68521. You can also fax them to us at (402) 474-5132. We reserve the right to edit the letters for clarity, content and length. For those with electronic mail abilities, Hleditor@aol.com.

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It's Official

In mid-August, Tom Osborne officially joined the legends of college coaching. The former Cornhusker coach was inducted in the National Football Foundation Hall of Fame in ceremonies at South Bend, Ind., home of the hall. Osborne was among 22 inductees at the annual event.

He also was the last of 10 inductees who spoke to an audience of 1,000.

Osborne said he had taken two things from nearly 50 years of involvement in organized football, "the relationships with the players, the coaches" and "the fact that it stretched me about as far as I could be stretched . . . and maybe sometimes beyond what I thought my capacities were."

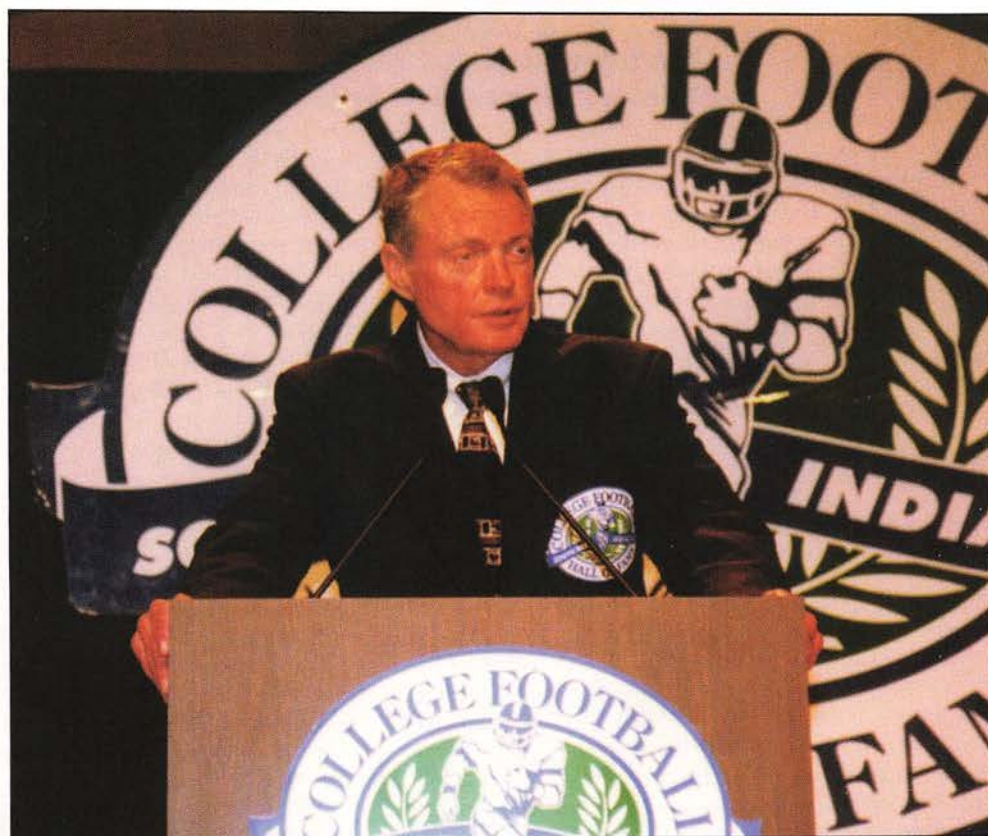
He spent the last 25 of those nearly 50 years as head coach, directing the Cornhuskers to 255 victories and three national championships in his final four seasons.

He was the nation's winningest coach by percentage when he retired.

Osborne ranks fifth all-time among Division I-A coaches in winning percentage (.836), behind Barry Switzer (.837), George Woodruff (.846), Frank Leahy (.864) and Knute Rockne (.881).

He had to wait 21 seasons to coach his first national championship team. But he didn't have to wait at all for enshrinement into the Hall of Fame, after the Honors Committee waived the three-year waiting period. The only other coach for whom that has been done is Grambling's Eddie Robinson.

Hall of Fame executive director Bernie Kish told the Lincoln Journal Star that the



Former Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne speaks during induction ceremonies at South Bend, Ind.

waiver was reasonable given the fact that Osborne is "such a man of class and dignity."

"I think he stands for what's good about college

football coaching."

Osborne is the sixth coach with Nebraska ties to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. And he is the only one to spend his entire

coaching career at Nebraska. He also was an assistant under Bob Devaney, one of the other five, during Devaney's 11 seasons in charge of the Cornhuskers.

Osborne was Devaney's hand-picked successor in 1973.

After Osborne, Devaney is probably most closely associated with the Cornhuskers, coming to Nebraska after five successful seasons as head coach at Wyoming.

D.X. Bible spent eight of his 33 years as a head coach at Nebraska, between stints at Texas A&M and Texas., and Biff Jones had success at Army, LSU and Oklahoma as well as Nebraska, where he spent five seasons and took the Cornhuskers to their first bowl game — the 1941 Rose Bowl.

HUSKERS IN THE HALL OF FAME

Coaches	Inducted
Fielding H. Yost (1898)	1951
D.X. Bible (1929-36)	1951
"Biff" Jones (1937-41)	1954
E.N. Robinson (1896-97)	1955
Bob Devaney (1962-72)	1981
Tom Osborne (1973-97)	1999
Players	
Ed Weir (1923-25)	1951
George Sauer (1931-33)	1954
Guy Chamberlin (1913-15)	1962
Clarence Swanson (1919-22)	1973
Sam Francis (1934-36)	1977
Bobby Reynolds (1950-52)	1984
Forrest Behm (1938-40)	1988
Wayne Meylan (1965-67)	1991
Bob Brown (1962-63)	1993
Rich Glover (1970-72)	1995
Dave Rimington (1979-82)	1997

Edward North Robinson and Fielding Yost were only briefly at Nebraska before moving on to success elsewhere, Robinson at Brown University (where he played) and Yost at Michigan.

Robinson was known as the "Walter Camp of Brown Football," coaching there from 1898 to 1926. He began his coaching career at Nebraska in 1896 and 1897.

Yost, who played at Lafayette, coached Nebraska in 1898, then moved to Kansas and eventually on to Michigan, where he coached for 25 seasons and served as athletic director. ■

HI-YO SILVER

"I feel extremely unwanted, (like) the Lone Ranger," Cornhusker linebackers coach Craig Bohl said while the freshmen football players were practicing before the arrival of the varsity and the start of fall camp. "Coach Solich said he was going to have to prorate my salary."

Bohl had no players with whom to work because the only scholarship freshman linebackers, Blanchard Johnson and Shaun Coleman, were recovering from injuries and didn't report.

Johnson joined the team for practice on the first day of fall-semester classes. Coleman, who has a hand injury, will not go on scholarship and join the team until second semester.

RAVAGES OF AGE?

The ravages of age? Quarterbacks coach Turner Gill stepped in at quarterback during drills at a freshman practice after Jammal Lord had to leave with a split lip. "Based on today, Turner is not in the battle for the quarterback spot," Coach Frank Solich said, tongue in cheek.

"He fumbled a couple of snaps. He had a low pass. He forgot to send a man in motion."

Gill was a three-time All-Big Eight quarterback for the Cornhuskers from 1981 to 1983. ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?



BIG 12 VOLLEYBALL PICK? WHO ELSE BUT NEBRASKA

Coach Terry Pettit's Husker volleyball team was a unanimous pick to repeat as Big 12 champion in a vote of conference coaches, conducted by the Big 12 Service Bureau.

Texas A&M was second in the voting, picking up one first-place vote from Pettit. Coaches were not allowed to vote for their own team. The Aggies were followed by Texas and Colorado.

The Huskers' Nancy Meendering was picked as the preseason player of the year and Laura Pilakowski was picked as the top incoming freshman. Pilakowski is from Columbus, Neb.

BRIEFLY NOTED

— Isn't that special? If it seems like the Nebraska football team is spending more practice time on the kicking game this season, it is. Or at least it was during preseason camp.

"I thought our special-teams play was OK last year, but I didn't think it was up to the level we want to be here at Nebraska," Coach Frank Solich said by way of explanation.

— Cornhusker football players Tony Ortiz and Matt Baldwin were among those receiving bachelor's degrees at the university's graduation ceremonies in mid-August.

Former Cornhusker football players Morgan Gregory, Kyle Henson, Cartier Walker and Trampis Wrice also received degrees, as did Damien Peter.

— He's in the money. Former Cornhusker basketball player Eric Piatkowski has signed a four-year contract worth a reported \$12 million with the Los Angeles Clippers. Piatkowski, a free agent after five years with the Clippers, averaged 10.5 points and 2.9 rebounds last season.

He is the team's all-time leader in 3-point attempts and goals.

"We're delighted to have Eric back," Clippers vice president Elgin Baylor told the Associated Press. "He has played a valuable role for our team during the last five years."

— Movers and shakers. Coaches Tom Osborne and Bob Devaney, players Dave Rimington and Johnny Rodgers and director of performance Boyd Epley were among the 100 "Most Important People of the Century" in college football, according to Lindy's College Football magazine.

NEW HOST

Larry Puntenev, the sports director at television station KLKN in Lincoln for the last 3 1/2 years, has been hired by HuskerVision to replace Bill Doleman as host of the Frank Solich Show.

Puntenev also will play host for volleyball coach Terry Pettit's show, women's basketball coach Paul Sanderford's show and the Husker Show. Doleman, who wrote a column for Huskers Illustrated, left Nebraska in mid-August to do University of Houston play-by-play and coaches shows.

Puntenev is a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

ALL HANDS ON BOARD

The Nebraska men's basketball team began its early-morning preseason conditioning program on the first day of fall-semester classes with all 11 scholarship players having reported. The group included six newcomers: junior college transfers Kimani Ffriend, Steffon Bradford, Danny Walker and George Mazyck, as well as freshmen Kenny Booker and Brian Conklin.

Bradford, Walker and Ffriend, all of whom are considered potential starters in their first season at Nebraska, prepared by playing in the Los Angeles Summer Pro League.

Cookie Belcher and Larry Florence are the Cornhuskers' returning starters.

THE EYES HAVE IT

Nebraska is one of two universities for which sports related contact lenses are being test marketed by Wesley Jessen, according to Omaha World-Herald columnist Rainbow Rowell.

The contact lens company's Emblem Eyes for Nebraska include a block N and the word Huskers on the lenses. The company also is test-marketing Michigan-related contact lenses.

Five offices in Nebraska are offering the Nebraska Emblem Eyes lenses. They sell for \$99 a pair unless they are prescription lenses, in which case the cost is \$144.

Eye-yeye-yeye ... ■

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Small Town Product Living A Dream

*Battle Creek's Volk tries to fill void
created by loss of senior tackle Schwab*



**Mike
BABCOCK**

AN EMOTIONAL DAVE VOLK will make the Tunnel Walk with his teammates before Nebraska's home-opener against California. Volk has taken the walk before, as a redshirted freshman.

"I got choked up coming out of the tunnel last year," he said.

But this will be even more special because he is now the starting offensive right tackle.

Volk is also among the many Nebraska natives on Coach Frank Solich's second team. He was born and raised in Battle Creek. And like many of the other Nebraskans, he is living a childhood dream.

"Every kid who lives in Nebraska, this is what he wants to do at this age," Volk said.

Such a statement requires some qualification, of course. But Volk can be forgiven for the exaggeration. The Cornhuskers have held a fascination for him since before his first visit to Memorial Stadium with his grandfather in the mid-1980s. "It was just pretty neat at that age," Volk said.

"I'd never seen that many people at once, coming from Battle Creek."

Despite its small size, the northeast Nebraska community has produced several Cornhusker football players, including Tyrone Uhler, a redshirted freshman full-back, and Matt Hoskinson, an offensive lineman who made a significant contribution to the 1997 national championship team.

Hoskinson was a back-up at guard and center. But he was considered a starter.

"When I first came here, he was real good to me," Volk said.

Volk would attend "probably three or four" more games before Nebraska began recruiting him. He also drew recruiting interest from Tennessee, Kansas State, Kansas and Wyoming.

But the Cornhuskers had the inside track from the beginning.

Volk is among a handful of first-year starters on a veteran team. He began fall camp expecting to be the "swing" tackle, backing up returning starters Adam Julch and Jason Schwab.

But Schwab suffered torn ligaments in his right knee on the first day of practice in full pads, and Volk was next in line. "This is the last way I wanted to be a starter," he told reporters.

"It's kind of a tragedy when you lose a player the caliber of Schwab. He's a great, great player. So it's a setback. But it's something that we're going to be able to work through."

Volk earned a letter as Schwab's back-up last season, in addition to playing on the extra-point and field-goal teams. He saw action in every game, including the Holiday Bowl.

With Julch on the sideline recovering from ankle surgery

and resting his back, Volk played left tackle with the first-team offense during spring practice. So even though he wasn't comfortable about the circumstances that led to his promotion, he was comfortable with the position itself.

Left tackle or right tackle, "I don't see any difference at all," he said.

"It's basically the hand you put down."

As a freshman on the scout team two seasons ago, Volk might not always have been certain which hand to put down. "I was worried about Jason Peter," he said. "There wasn't much else on my mind. Jason and Grant (Wistrom) pretty much took up most of my thoughts that whole season."

He stretched the word "whole" for emphasis. "It was all right," he said.

He paused, then added with a laugh: "It was kind of a nightmare."

Going against the two All-Americans also was a valuable learning experience "for everybody who came in on that line," said Volk. "Our whole freshman line was basically that scout team."

"You never really beat those guys, but coming through the season, you could tell there was improvement. I think going against guys of that caliber helped a lot."

Apparently so. Three other offensive linemen from his recruiting class figure in Nebraska's plans this season: Dominic Raiola, the starting center, Kyle Kollmorgen and Jon Rutherford.

Kollmorgen and Rutherford, who had been expected to be the "swing" guard, have been competing for the "swing" tackle

spot left open when Volk moved up to the first team.

The loss of Schwab has had repercussions all down the line.

Two years ago, Volk was sitting with them and the other redshirt freshmen in the South Stadium, watching. Last year, they got to make the Tunnel Walk for the first time.

"I thought I'd be able to hear the music," Volk said.

But the cheers of a capacity crowd in Nebraska's continuing NCAA record of 227 consecutive sellouts drowned out the sounds of "Sirius" by the Alan Parsons Project.

Volk experienced that energy, minus the music, for the first time a dozen or so years ago.

It will be different, if for no other reason than the skyboxes and pressbox that reach toward the heavens on the west side and the FieldTurf artificial surface, which is easily mistaken for real grass.

He won't be seeing it through the eyes of a child. But the awe will be much the same. ■



**Dave Volk is among a handful
of first-year starters.**

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at mdb@inetnebr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

So Many Things Have To Happen

*It's harder than ever
to have the pieces fall into place*



**Bob
SCHALLER**

SO MANY STEPS, so little patience.

One game into the season, the talk surrounding the Huskers already concerns national title hopes. Players are asked about it by family, friends, the media — and even strangers.

Yet this is a team that not only was excluded from a title shot last year, but also didn't win the Big 12 Championship.

Or even the North Division, for that matter.

The national title of 1997 seems so long ago, yet Nebraska is just one year removed from being atop college football's Holy Grail. The titles from 1994 and 1995 seem like an eternity ago to many fans.

Nebraska's players have to answer questions concerning how their legacy can possibly live up to "standard" if they don't win the national championship.

Think Iowa's players were thinking about that last weekend before the Hawkeyes played host to Nebraska? No, Iowa answers questions such as why it lost to its sub-.500 intrastate rival or to longtime Big 10 doormat Minnesota last year.

College football is cyclical. With a sense of parity almost unseen in the century, it is harder than ever to have all the pieces fall into place for just a spot in the national title bowl game, much less the title itself.

That makes the impressive run of Nebraska through the mid-1990s that much more mind-boggling. But it shouldn't take away from what last year's, and this year's, teams accomplished.

We, as Nebraskans, have been spoiled because the bar, set at human-achievable standards for so long, has been raised to the stratosphere because of the back-to-back national championships along with the one two years ago.

A lot has to happen for Nebraska to contend for the national championship this year. The health of the team is a factor, as is the development of younger linemen on both sides of the ball.

There are reasons through the roof for optimism. The sight of Bobby Newcombe conjures up memories of — wait, let's not go there . . . DeAngelo Evans, at full speed and in top health, is as good a back as there is in the country. Dan Alexander is a Caterpillar earth mover in cleats. Only Wisconsin's Ron Dayne can provide the mass plus speed ratio that Alexander displays when he gets a full head of steam.

This offensive line has the kind of personality of several successful Nebraska lines from the past. Dominic Raiola could be the dominator that Nebraska lacked at center the past two years.

But so many other things have to happen. Nebraska has never, and will never, get the benefit of the doubt in the east-coast ruled rankings.

Yet there are building blocks in place. How those will stack up, and how that foundation is built upon, is yet to be seen. This team could be one injury away from being in the national championship picture, yet it could charge into the frame on a moment's notice.

There is plenty of motivation: The unfathomable agony of watching K-State's equivalent of HuskerVision showing Herbie Husker getting taken out on the tracks by the Wildcat Express before kickoff last year.

Wins over Nebraska last year undoubtedly boosted the preseason hype for conference foes Texas and Texas A&M, not to mention Arizona.

However, Nebraska has to worry about only one thing: Nebraska. Numbers can be crunched to the nth degree and one can compare schedules based on last year's record to see where Nebraska should stack up. But those numbers aren't worth the paper on which they are written.

"We have a football team that has excellent potential," NU coach Frank Solich surmised. "Potential has never won any games."

The Nebraska teams that did dominate and won national titles never worried about the opponents. That hasn't changed under Solich — and don't expect it to any time soon, which is the way it should be.

Last year, the team entered the season with the weight of the Sears Trophy on its shoulders. That was, at best, an assumption, one based on players who were no longer with the program. This year's team has a lot of reasons to get Husker fans whipped into a Big Red frenzy.

And regardless of the lack of validity to the criticisms that Solich endured last year, he's done

what he's had to do to keep his team focused. Fretting over the strength of any opponent only takes away from what Nebraska is trying to accomplish in terms of the stainless steel intensity and focus that directly led to Nebraska's run of domination.

Solich has done some tweaking with everything from the coaching assignments to off-season conditioning. He's not complacent after what happened last year — yet he wouldn't have left everything alone even if Nebraska did win another title last season.

Coaches around the league — and country — have joked about how winning nine games would have put an exclamation point at the end of their 1998 season, whereas Solich had a question mark hanging over his.

There is a time and a place for everything. The Huskers have plenty of time to get to that place. By no means should it be written in stone that they will be there.

But with the talent and coaching this team has, it would be a mistake to write them off, too. ■



**The sight of Bobby
Newcombe con-
jures up memories.**

Bob Schaller covers the Huskers for the Scottsbluff Star-Herald. He has also written several books, including "Touchdown Tommie" and "Roar of Silence: The Kenny Walker Story."

Quality Depth Necessary For Title Run

Huskers will need to avoid rash of injuries similar to 1998



Curt McKEEVER

TEAMS WHO CONTEND for national championships all seem to have a few play-makers who respond in the spotlight.

Those clubs also manage to get their share of good fortune.

But perhaps the biggest factor that goes into making a run for it all is having enough quality depth.

Look at what happened to Nebraska in 1998. The Cornhuskers began the season among a handful expected to battle for a spot in the Fiesta Bowl. Instead, they went through three starting quarterbacks, three starting I-backs and had nine top-unit players miss a total of 45 games en route to finishing with a 9-4 record.

Looking back, that mark should be recognized as a tribute to players who stepped in to pick up for fallen teammates than as the sign of a team that failed to meet expectations.

I'm sure you can think of many teams around the country that, had they been depleted as much as Nebraska, would have struggled to end up with a winning record.

Even before two-a-day practices ended last fall, NU was running two-team stations instead of three.

I bring this up because, already in 1999, the Cornhuskers are having to plug second-unit players in the starting lineup.

At right tackle, Jason Schwab, a starter in every game during 1998, was lost for the season on August 16 with a major knee injury. Third-year sophomore Dave Volk moved into that spot.

"He's a very smart guy," NU center Dominic Raiola said of Volk. "He played a lot last season and kept coming along and coming along. He was already looked upon as a starter by all of us."

Schwab wasn't the only loss.

On Aug. 20, wingback Shevin Wiggins was arrested on a felony charge of sexual assault of a 14-year-old girl. Because university policy prevents students charged with felonies or violent misdemeanors from representing the school until their case is resolved, Wiggins, who recently won an appeal with the NCAA for a rare sixth year of eligibility, is likely done as a Cornhusker.

Nebraska Coach Frank Solich agrees with the policy but has found it challenging to move on emotionally.

"Personally, I think we do all we can to try to have our players react in a manner that we feel everybody should react, and when it doesn't happen it hurts," he said. "We really spend a great deal of time with these players, period.

It's a year-round basis you're with them, and so you get very attached to them and you get to know their character and you know that they're good people. When something does happen, it's really a setback for everybody."

Sean Applegate, John Gibson and Frankie London — with no starts between them — now could fill the void at wingback by-committee.

Applegate, a senior who walked on out of Lincoln High five years ago, is regarded as the most tenacious blocker of the bunch.

"I have pretty good hands, I think, but where we need the help is as a blocker," Applegate said. "Hopefully, I'll take over that role."

Applegate received a scholarship just this fall, and receivers coach Ron Brown said he believes that's provided the 5-foot-9, 185-pounder with a confidence boost.

"He's one of those guys that wants to bust out of the cage," Brown said. "He's not the kind of guy that's just content with sitting around and kind of doing a role. He did it, and he cooperated, but you can tell he was just foaming at the bit this year because he realizes he has an opportunity to step forward and be part of the whole show."

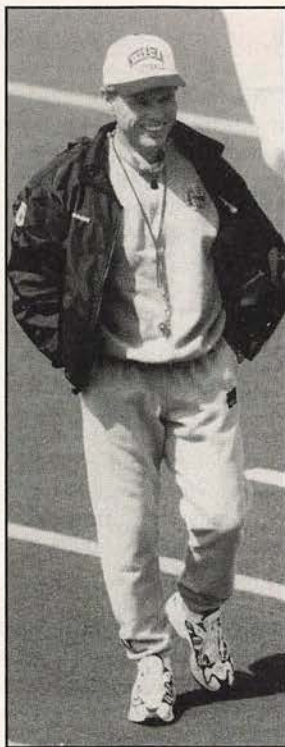
The Cornhuskers have been fortunate keeping their quarterbacks and I-backs healthy, but (not counting most of the two-deeps on defense), those could be the team's deepest positions.

NU also appears well-stocked at fullback and tight end. Willie Miller and Ben Kingston received praise in the preseason, but both also missed practice time with minor injuries. At tight end, T.J. DeBates and Tracey Wistrom should give Nebraska a solid blocking-receiving combo.

Positions where depth is of most concern are split end, the interior offensive line and at both kicking spots.

Go-to guy Matt Davison is the only wide-out on the team who had a catch in 1998. All but one of the top reserve offensive linemen are sophomores or freshmen. Place-kicker Josh Brown, who missed time during fall camp with a groin injury, is a first-year player. And punter Dan Hadenfeldt, a senior, also is seeing his first major duty.

So far, most of Nebraska's main bodies are operating on all cylinders. And Solich sounds comfortable with the depth at most positions. It's just he'd rather not have to test it like he had to in 1998. ■



Frank Solich had to deal with the loss of wingback Shevin Wiggins.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

Bears Looking for Right Mix

Cal could have its best defense since the 1968 'Bear Minimum' unit

In recent years, Cal has often had some of the best offensive or defensive units in the Pacific-10. Unfortunately, the team has not been able to put together solid efforts from both sides of the football in the same seasons.

In 1996, Cal finished second in the Pac-10 in total offense (457.6 ypg) and was tops in passing offense (321.5 ypg) but was last in total defense (460.3 ypg). Last season, Cal was third in the Pac-10 in total defense (340.3 ypg), but the offense was last in

CALIFORNIA

Record 1-0

S4	Rutgers	W, 21-7
S11	@ Nebraska	
S25	Arizona St.	
O 2	@ Washington St.	
O 9	@ BYU	
O16	@ UCLA	
O23	Washington	
O30	USC	
N 6	@ Oregon St.	
N13	Oregon	
N20	@ Stanford	

NEBRASKA

Record 1-0

S4	@ Iowa	W, 42-7
S11	California	
S18	So. Mississippi	
S 25	@ Missouri	
O 2	Oklahoma St.	
O 9	Iowa St.	
O23	@ Texas	
O30	@ Kansas	
N 6	Texas A&M	
N13	Kansas St.	
N26	@ Colorado	

CALIFORNIA
(1-0)

VS

NEBRASKA
(1-0)



Sept. 11, 1999 • 2:30 p.m. (CDT) •
ABC • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln

total offense (292.2 ypg).

This season, Cal will have perhaps its best defense since the 1968 "Bear Minimum" unit that allowed opponents only 10.4 points per game (ranking fourth in the NCAA) and just 252.2 yards a game (11th nationally). However, the team's hope for real success will be contingent on whether an inexperienced offense can improve significantly on last year's performance.

There were encouraging signs in the preseason that Cal will be far better than anticipated along the offensive line and at the running back positions. If Cal can establish a passing game threat, the Bears could emerge as one of the nation's surprise teams.

DEFENSE HOPES TO DOMINATE

It's clear that a star-laden Cal defense's hope to be dominant this fall is not just an ambition, but a necessity, if the Bears hope to evolve into one of the nation's top teams in 1999.

There's clearly no lack of talent on that side of the football as four different starters are considered by most NFL scouts as potential first round draft picks — outside linebacker Sékou Sanyika, defensive tackle Jerry DeLoach, defensive end Andre Carter and inside linebacker Matt Beck.

Add in players like defensive end Mawuko Tugbenyoh, who has returned three fumbles for touchdowns over this career, safety Pete Destefano, ranked among the top 25 safeties in college football by Lindy's magazine, cornerback Deltha O'Neal, rated by Lindy's as

the No. 8 all-purpose player in the nation, and cornerback Chidi Iwuoma, who has started games the last two seasons and is primed for a big year, and it isn't difficult to understand the optimism.

After inheriting a defense that ranked last in the Pac-10 the year before he arrived in 1996, highly regarded defensive coordinator Lyle Setencich took the Bears to eighth in '97 and third last year.

DOUBLE DOSE AT QUARTERBACK

Depending on your perspective, Cal either has a great wealth of ability at the

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	3	Matt Davison**	6-1	180	Jr.
	9	Wilson Thomas	6-5	210	Fr.
LT	69	Adam Julch***	6-5	320	Sr.
	66	Jon Rutherford*	6-3	295	So.
LG	63	James Sherman***	6-4	295	Sr.
	77	Toni Fonoti	6-4	330	Fr.
C	54	Dominic Raiola*	6-2	295	So.
	51	Matt Baldwin**	6-2	285	Sr.
RG	55	Russ Hochstein**	6-3	280	Jr.
	64	Steve Alstadt	6-5	275	So.
RT	58	Dave Volk*	6-5	295	So.
	75	Kyle Kollmorgen*	6-5	290	So.
TE	85	T.J. DeBates***	6-3	250	Sr.
and	87	Tracey Wistrom	6-5	220	So.
QB	12	Bobby Newcombe**	6-0	195	Jr.
	7	Eric Crouch*	6-1	195	So.
FB	15	Willie Miller**	6-1	240	Jr.
	22	Ben Kingston**	6-1	240	Sr.
IB	4	DeAngelo Evans**	5-9	215	Jr.
	38	Dan Alexander**	6-0	245	Jr.
WB	82	Sean Applegate**	5-9	185	Sr.
	8	John Gibson*	6-0	185	Jr.
PK	26	Josh Brown	6-2	185	Fr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR	81	Aaron Wills***	6-2	250	Sr.
	57	Chris Kelsay	6-5	255	Fr.
NT	96	Steve Warren***	6-2	315	Sr.
	70	Jason Lohr*	6-2	275	So.
DT	91	Loran Kaiser**	6-4	290	Jr.
	56	Jeremy Slechta*	6-6	280	So.
RR	83	Kyle Vanden Bosch*	6-4	270	Jr.
	95	J.P. Wichmann	6-4	220	So.
SLB	37	Tony Ortiz***	6-1	220	Sr.
-or-	46	Brian Shaw**	6-1	220	Sr.
MLB	13	Carlos Polk**	6-2	250	Jr.
	48	Jamie Burrow*	6-1	235	So.
WLB	27	Eric Johnson***	6-1	205	Sr.
	50	Julius Jackson***	6-1	240	Sr.
LCB	3	Keyuo Craver*	5-10	190	So.
	5	DeJuan Groce	5-10	190	Fr.
FS	19	Clint Finley**	6-0	205	Jr.
	14	Dion Booker*	6-1	205	So.
ROV	21	Mike Brown***	5-10	205	Sr.
	29	Gregg List***	5-11	220	Sr.
RCB	22	Ralph Brown***	5-10	180	Sr.
	18	Jeff Hemje	6-0	185	So.
P	17	Dan Hadenfeldt*	5-11	195	Sr.

Tentative 2 Deeps

CAL DEFENSE

DE	58	M. Tugbenyoh***	6-1	250	Sr.
	9	Johnny Jackson	6-4	250	Jr.
NT	94	Jacob Waasdorp**	6-2	270	Jr.
	91	Tim Pompa	6-4	275	So.
DT	98	Jerry DeLoach***	6-4	310	Sr.
	92	Daniel Nwangwu	6-4	295	Fr.
DE	97	Andre Carter**	6-4	250	Jr.
	90	Wayne Hunter	6-6	280	Fr.
OLB	13	Sekou Sanyika***	6-4	240	Sr.
	49	Scott Fujita*	6-5	235	So.
ILB	99	Matt Beck***	6-4	235	Sr.
	45	Chris Ball	6-3	215	Jr.
ILB	53	Keith Miller*	6-2	240	Sr.
	43	Jamaal Cherry*	6-4	260	So.
LC	8	Deltha O'Neal***	5-11	195	Sr.
	11	Drae Harris*	5-10	185	Sr.
FS	20	Pete Destefano**	6-2	215	Sr.
	19	Bert Watts	6-1	205	Fr.
SS	2	Damian Marzett*	6-0	210	Sr.
	36	Dewey Hale*	6-0	195	So.
RC	25	Chidi Iwuoma**	5-9	185	Jr.
	28	Hardi Pearson**	5-10	187	So.
P	89	Nick Harris**	6-3	215	Jr.

CAL OFFENSE

WR	86	Sean Currin*	6-1	185	So.
	3	Michael Ainsworth	6-1	190	Fr.
LT	60	Reed Diehl**	6-4	300	Jr.
	72	Chris Chick	6-5	290	Jr.
LG	65	Brandon Ludwig*	6-4	295	So.
	64	Scott Tercero	6-5	280	Fr.
C	73	John Romero**	6-3	320	Sr.
	74	Nolan Bluntzer	6-4	255	Fr.
RG	71	Kevin Doherty**	6-5	295	Sr.
	56	Y. Williams***	6-6	300	Sr.
RT	66	Langston Walker*	6-8	330	So.
	76	Nick Shaeffer	6-5	255	Fr.
TE	87	Brian Surgener**	6-4	225	Jr.
	32	Corey Smith*	6-4	250	So.
WR	6	Joel Young**	6-2	185	Sr.
	9	Ronnie Davenport*	6-2	190	So.
QB	5	Samuel Clemons*	6-2	215	So.
-or-	7	Kyle Boller	6-4	200	Fr.
FB	40	Joshua White**	5-11	250	Sr.
	41	Ryan Stanger	6-2	230	Fr.
TB	4	Marcus Fields**	6-2	215	Jr.
	34	S. Muhammad*	6-0	205	So.
PK	10	Jeremy Hershey	6-0	180	Fr.

PICKS

Brian Hill
Editor

Nebraska 27, Cal 7

On paper, Cal's defense looks good. Nebraska's new FieldTurf isn't paper.

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor
Nebraska 38, Cal 10

If teams make the most improvement between the first and second games, the Cornhuskers could be rolling pretty good for their home opener in refurbished Memorial Stadium.

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent
Sports Editor
Nebraska 56, Cal 17

Nebraska won't get caught California dreamin' this year. The Bears will be just another Pac-10 team that can't wait to get out of Lincoln.

Jon Schuetz
Omaha KETV (Channel 7)
Sports Director
Nebraska 21, Cal 0

California's defense was pretty salty last season. It was one of the better defenses Nebraska saw, and seven starters return. So the game looks like it will be the first really good test of the Cornhuskers' offensive line.

Brian Higgins
Oakland Tribune
Cal Beat Writer
Nebraska 24, Cal 10

There's little question that Cal's defense is talented and poised enough to hold its own, even in this venue. But facing the Huskers in the season's second game is an ill-timed test that is likely to overwhelm an inexperienced quarterback running a freshly installed offense, with a freshman-dominated receiving corps.

quarterback position or a dangerous lack of depth.

The Bears have two young talents in sophomore Sam Clemons and freshman Kyle Boller, who are both expected to get playing time early in the season. Both of them have shown signs they could develop into highly competent starters, although neither player has any

significant game experience at the collegiate level.

Clemons played in four games as a redshirt-freshman last fall, completing 2-of-12 passes for two yards, but has made significant strides since the end of the 1998 season. Boller, the '98 California state high school Player of the Year, will see his first collegiate action this season, after throwing for 4,838 yards and 59 TDs last year at Hart High School in Newhall.

WHITE MOLDS OFFENSIVE LINE

After Cal's offensive line gave up 58 sacks last year (worst in the Pac-10), lost its best lineman in fourth-round NFL draft choice John Welbourn and had to find its third new line coach in three seasons, there were not many who believed better things lay ahead in 1999.

Head Coach Tom Holmoe went looking for a miracle-worker. He may have found one in new assistant coach Ed White, who returns to Cal this fall for the first time in 31 years to handle offensive line chores.

White has only been on the job since January, but he seems to have quickly orchestrated a major transformation of Cal's forward wall. His group's performance during the preseason was perhaps the team's most positive development, and now many close to the program believe Cal's offensive line play may become a strength, rather than a liability.

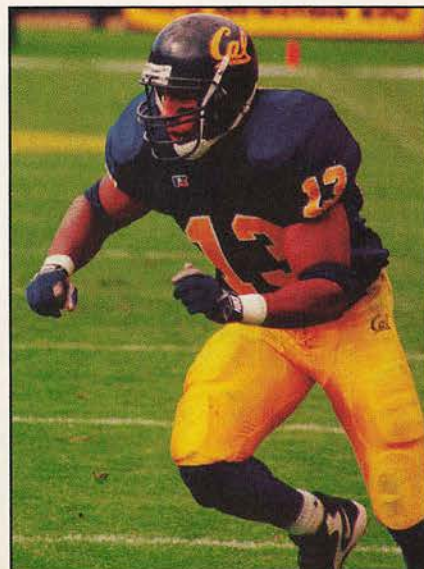
At center, senior John Romero is clearly an anchor that any program would be proud to call its own. The 6-3, 320-pounder was recently named to the NFL Draft Report's first team All-America squad and is ranked by *Lindy's* magazine as the No. 5 center in college football.

White's work with the supporting cast is attracting the most attention. Returning starters Langston Walker (6-8, 340) and Brandon Ludwig (6-4, 295) seem ready to blossom as sophomores under White's work and could be honors candidates over the next few seasons.

Junior Reid Diehl (6-4, 305) is another White student who seems to be making major strides. Senior Kevin Doherty (6-4, 295) has improved and is listed as the starter at a guard position opposite Ludwig.

Yauger Williams (6-6, 305) came out of retirement midway through fall camp and earned the starting job in the opener in place of Ludwig, who was nursing a sore shoulder. Williams returned for his sixth year of eligibility after missing all of last year.

That gives Cal a nucleus of six solid players for 1999. Perhaps more signifi-



Outside linebacker Sékou Sanyika is a three-year letterman and potential first-round draft choice.

cant is the impression that several Cal incoming freshmen offensive line players have made. Foremost among those are guard Scott Tercero and center Nolan Bluntzer.

NO-NAME BEARS

Entering the season, a fair number of Cal players have established reputations as some of college football's finest. Hopefully, announcers and spectators have memorized those numbers entering the 1999 season, because the Golden Bear uniforms will not sport names across the back of the jerseys this fall.

Over the summer, senior linebacker Matt Beck led a group of players who proposed to Holmoe that the names be removed. The move is a symbol that success this season will come as a result of team unity and combined efforts, rather than that of individual performances. It's the first time since 1981 that Cal hasn't had players' names on the back of the uniforms.

DIFFICULT SCHEDULE

According to *Sports Illustrated*, Cal's schedule, which features non-conference games against Rutgers, Nebraska and BYU, is rated the second-toughest in the country.

BEARS PICKED SEVENTH

Cal was picked to finish seven the Pac-10 preseason media poll.

Arizona was an overwhelming choice to win the title, followed by USC, UCLA, Arizona State, Oregon, Washington, Cal, Stanford, Oregon State and Washington State. ■





Backup I-back Dan Alexander (above) used big holes like this to lead all rushers with 95 yards. Most of the attention was on the quarterbacks, and starter Bobby Newcombe (left) came back from a slow start to rush for two touchdowns and pass for a third.

*It might be a quarterback controversy,
but all it meant for Iowa was . . .*

Double Trouble

**Story by Mike Babcock
Photos by Scott Bruhn**

Tom Osborne always maintained that the joy of coaching was in the journey rather than the destination. Considering the events of the previous week, Frank Solich might not agree.

In this particular case, at least, the joy must have been in the destination, a 42-7 victory over Iowa. Because the journey was difficult, beginning with rumors that sophomore quarterback Eric Crouch had quit the team after learning that he would not be the starter against the Hawkeyes.

The rumors were substantial enough that Solich missed a speaking engagement and didn't participate in the Big 12 coaches teleconference in order to travel to Omaha to meet with Crouch.

But when Solich was asked about the impromptu trip up Interstate 80 at his weekly news conference the



Nebraska's Steve Warren slams Iowa sophomore quarterback Kyle McCann to the turf for one of three sacks recorded by the Blackshirts. The Hawkeyes were limited to 169 total yards.

next day, he declined to address the issue. "I hope you understand," he said.

He did, however, say that Crouch "never did . . . tell me he was quitting or transferring. And with that, with stating that, I would like to move on, if we can, with questions concerning the game."

Immediately after the game, the issue was raised again. It was the subject of the first question Solich was asked, surrounded by reporters in a corner of the north end zone.

Those who pressed in to listen to his answer included a handful of the estimated 10,000 Cornhusker fans who contributed to a capacity crowd of 70,397 at Kinnick Stadium.

It was a ticket-scalpers' market in Iowa City, where such enterprise is legal.

That Solich had grown weary of

the quarterback question was apparent in his repeating it before responding. "With the two quarterbacks?" he said. "We're right where we're at with it. Both of them, I thought, really played well. We have two outstanding quarterbacks. Both will be used."

"So we're fortunate in that regard. Any time you're able to have fresh quarterbacks on the field in terms of their legs — and I-backs — in our style of offense, you probably have yourself something."

Iowa certainly had no basis for disagreeing. Newcombe rushed for two touchdowns and passed to wingback Sean Applegate for another, while Crouch ran for three touchdowns.

Although he respectfully declined to meet with reporters afterward, Crouch spoke with his

actions in the game, scoring the first points on a 28-yard option run. He went to his right and faked a pitch to I-back Dan Alexander, freezing the defenders and opening a clear path to the goal.

That was the second of two series in which he played during the first half. His first appearance was as a flanker, split wide to the left, a move that surprised just about everyone.

He ended up as a blocker for DeAngelo Evans on the play.

"I think any time you put Eric in the ballgame as a flanker, you're going to see coaches pointing; you're going to see players pointing; you're going to hear the fans yelling 'reverse,'" said Solich.

"And that's kind of what happened."

Crouch also lined up as a wide receiver on one play in the second

half. But it was as a quarterback that he made things happen. He directed three series in the fourth quarter, and scored on two.

The second was, perhaps, the most impressive run of the afternoon. After faking a handoff, he headed to the end zone and on the way put a shoulder into cornerback Mikkell Brown.

The collision occurred near the 8-yard line. Brown went down. And Crouch kept running.

The play would have made former Cornhusker quarterback Scott Frost, himself a punishing runner, proud.

"I probably had a chance to maybe try and run around that guy," Crouch said before boarding the team bus to leave the stadium. "But I decided it's a physical game, just try to show some people how physical the sport is and how physical the Nebraska team is."

On the previous play, also an option to his left, he gained 35 yards.

Considering his statistics — five carries, 92 yards, 3-of-5 passing for 68 yards, three touchdowns in his four series playing quarterback — the controversy is bound to continue.

But Solich wasn't about to make a change on the depth chart. "I'm not going to get into every practice, every game, who's our starting quarterback," he said with a hint of irritation in his voice. "We'll let you know when we make a quarterback, an I-back, change, or really any position change."

The game didn't settle the situation at I-back, either. DeAngelo Evans, the starter, carried 13 times for 69 yards, and Dan Alexander, the top backup, carried 15 times for 95 yards.

Evans said he felt ready to go before the game, but once it started, he felt sluggish. That wasn't apparent on the opening series, however. He ran for 7, 8 and 7 yards on his first three carries.

Alexander's first two carries, early in the second quarter, produced gains of 12 and 24 yards.

That set the tone for the game, although Nebraska struggled to get the ball in the end zone in the first half because of turnovers, two lost fumbles and a pass interception.

But when all was said and done, the Cornhuskers had 543 yards, including 347 rushing.

"We ran the ball at them fairly effectively in the first half, which was basically the game plan," Solich

4TH & 1NCHES

Notes And Quotes From The Iowa Game

EIGHT TRUE FRESHMEN ON TRAVEL ROSTER

Nebraska's travel roster of 88 players included eight true freshmen: nosetackle Ryon Bingham, cornerback Rob Blomeier, fullback Judd Davies, offensive guard Toniu Fonoti, center John Garrison, safety Taylor Gehman, quarterback Jammal Lord and cornerback Pat Ricketts.

Ricketts is a walkon from Omaha Millard North.

Gehman, Fonoti and Garrison all saw action.

Those who didn't play in the game could still be redshirted. Solich said earlier in the week that true freshman wingback Josh Davis would play this season. But Davis did not make the trip to Iowa City.

"Some of them will go into the early part of the season, and we'll see how things play out depth-wise for us and injury-wise for us," Solich said of the true freshmen.

"That will be a determining factor as far as some of them playing."

Travel roster limits are more generous for non-conference games.

NINE HUSKERS START FOR FIRST TIME

Nine Cornhuskers started for the first time, including place-kicker Josh Brown and punter Dan Hadenfeldt. The others were: rush ends Aaron Wills and Kyle Vanden Bosch, cornerback Keyuo Craver, middle linebacker Carlos Polk, offensive tackle Dave Volk, fullback Willie Miller and wingback Sean Applegate.

WINNING STREAK IN OPENERS REACHES 14

Nebraska now has won 14 consecutive openers since a 17-13 loss against Florida State at Memorial Stadium in 1985. Nebraska is one of four NCAA-Division I-A schools to have won each of its openers during the 1990s. Florida State, Kansas State and Florida are the others.

GILLESPIE MOVES TO COACHES' BOOTH, GILL TO SIDELINES

If you had difficulty finding Cornhusker running backs coach Dave Gillespie on the sideline, don't worry. Gillespie is in the coaches' booth now on game days, replacing quarterbacks coach Turner Gill, who now is on the sideline. Solich made the switch in assignments in order to facilitate communication with the quarterbacks. "This allows me to meet with anybody I need to meet with other than the quarterbacks," Solich said.

The other assistants in the coaches' box remain the same: secondarily coach George Darlington, rush ends coach Nelson Barnes and offensive line coach Milt Tenopir.

OTHER NOTABLES

— Junior split end Matt Davison extended a streak of games in which he has caught at least one pass to 18. He had a team-high four receptions for 69 yards.

— Junior I-back DeAngelo Evans carried 13 times for 69 yards to become the 48th player in Nebraska history to rush for 1,000 or more career yards. Evans now has 1,063 yards.

— Nebraska now has won 213 consecutive games in which it has scored at least 35 points.

— Cornhusker quarterback Eric Crouch was chosen as the ABC television "Offensive Player of the Game." Crouch rushed for 92 yards and three touchdowns.

— It was a good day for Nebraska's tight ends. They combined for five of 10 pass receptions. Tracey Wistrom had two catches for 32 yards. And Aaron Golliday, T.J. DeBates and Jake McKee each had one reception. The catches were career firsts for Golliday and McKee. ■

said. "We were hoping that we would be able to wear them down, and eventually we would start getting some bigger plays . . . and then eventually some play-action passes would enter into it.

"For the most part, that's what happened."

Newcombe completed 7-of-10 passes, with the one interception, to keep Iowa's defense off-balance.

Applegate was wide-open on the second reception of his career, and first for a touchdown.

"I was surprised how open I was," said Applegate, who got his first start. "When the ball was in the air, it was a little bit of a floater. But once I took off running, I knew I was going to get there. I was pretty stoked, pretty happy. That makes all those years of hard work worth it."

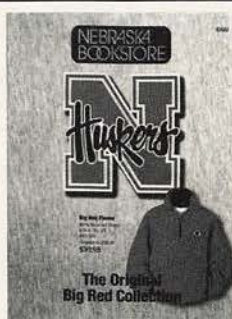
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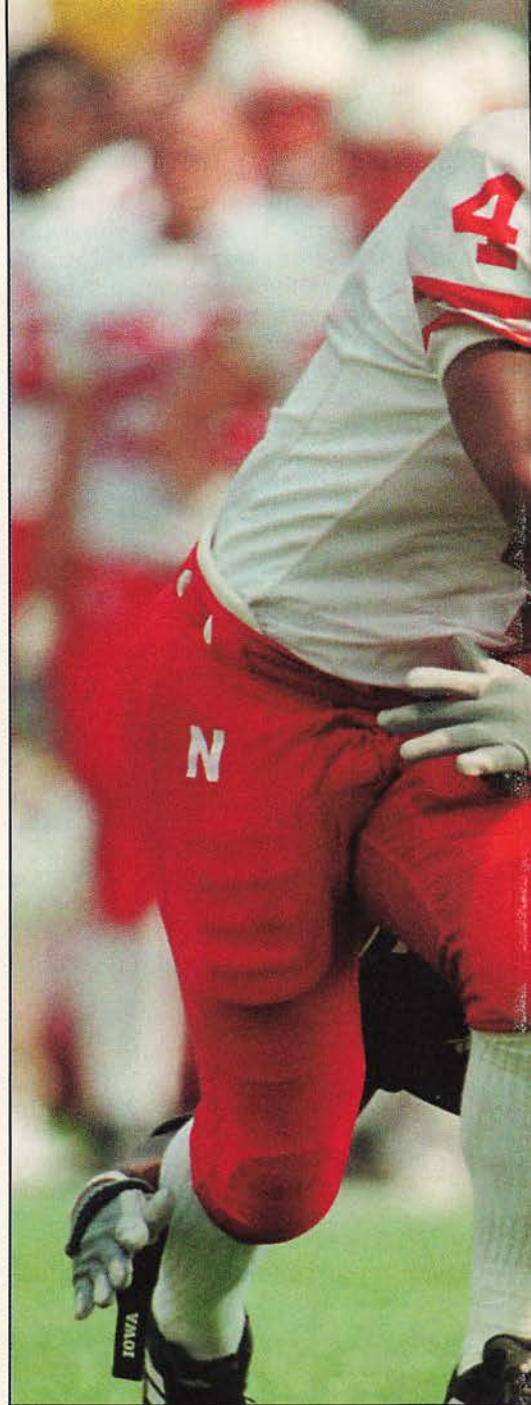
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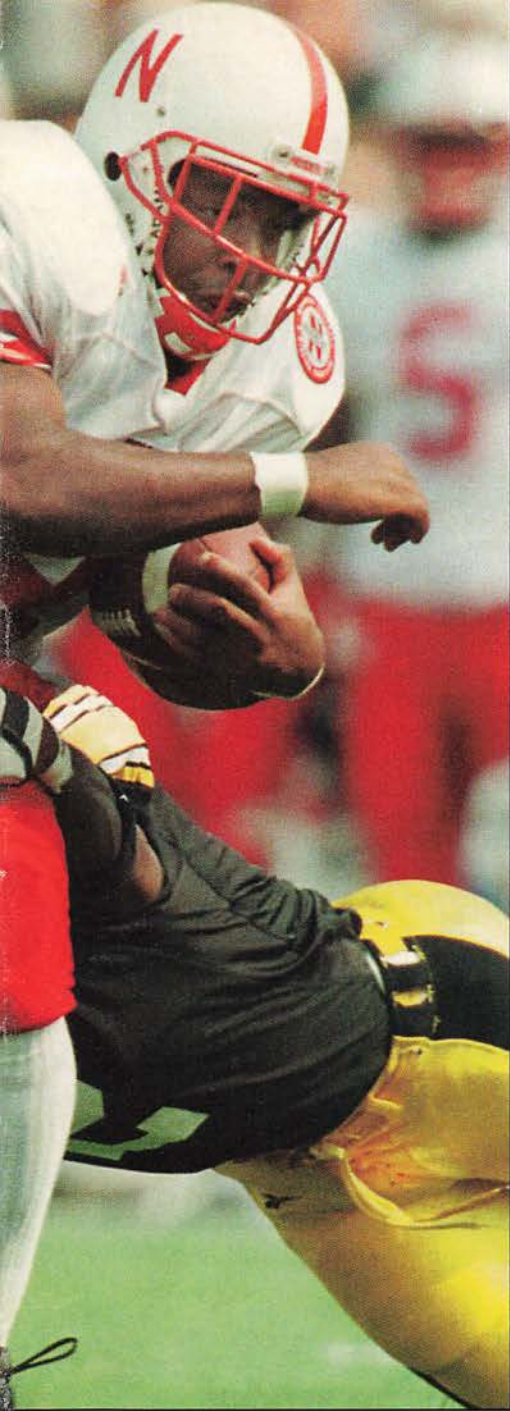


The walkon from Lincoln (Neb.) High School was put on scholarship this season.

In any case, there is no controversy at I-back, according to Alexander. He and Evans "kind of complement each other's style," he said. "It really works well together."

Alexander included Correll Buckhalter in that assessment. Such depth was a factor in the victory. "We really wore them out," Alexander said. "That's kind of the whole trick."

Though much of the attention focused on the offense, and specifically the quarterbacks, the defense came within two-and-a-half minutes of posting a shutout, something the



Starting I-back DeAngelo Evans, who has missed most of the last two seasons because of injuries, rushed 13 times for 69 yards. Nebraska finished with 347 yards on the ground.

Cornhuskers last accomplished in an opener against West Virginia (31-0) in the 1994 Kickoff Classic.

Iowa avoided being shut out by scoring on a blocked punt.

"That hurt real bad," said cornerback Ralph Brown. "But we (the first unit) weren't out there, and there's nothing you can do about it. I have a lot of confidence in our defense.

"I think we'll get a lot of shutouts."

Rover Mike Brown led the

Blackshirts with eight tackles. Rush end Aaron Wills and middle linebacker Carlos Polk, both of whom were starting for the first time, each was credited with five tackles.

Iowa didn't pick up a first down until 3:36 remained in the first half.

"The defense, I feel a little badly for them because they really played shutout defense," said Solich. "But we had the kick blocked . . . so we have a little work to do there. It was the second unit in there for the most part, but yet you expect to protect and get the ball off and cover better than we did."

On balance, however, there were few glaring deficiencies defensively or offensively.

Crouch left the field after the game to enthusiastic cheers. He would talk to reporters in a formal setting at Tuesday's news conference, the sports information office announced.

"Those rumors that kind of surfaced, everybody can just try and forget about those things," he said as he was getting on the bus. "You know, I'm feeling pretty good right now.

"That's pretty much all I can say."


Solich had to be feeling pretty good, too, considering the outcome.

But getting there was probably more difficult that he imagined it would be. ■

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BY THE NUMBERS



Frank Solich heads onto the field to begin his second season as head coach.

Nebraska vs. Iowa Sept. 4, 1999 • Iowa City, Iowa

Score By Quarters

Nebraska	0	7	14	21	—	42
Iowa	0	0	0	7	—	7

Team Stats

	NU	IU
First Downs	24	8
Rushing	17	2
Passing	7	5
Penalty	0	1
Rushing Attempts	62	26
Yards Gained Rushing	370	83
Yards Lost Rushing	23	26
Net Yards Rushing	347	57
Net Yards Passing	196	112
Passes Attempted	15	30
Passes Completed	10	11
Had Intercepted	1	1
Total Plays	77	56
Total Net Yards	543	169
Avg. Gain Per Play	7.1	3.0
Fumbles-Lost	3-2	2-2
Penalties-Yards	6-57	0-0
Punts-Yards	4-132	12-505
Avg. Per Punt	33.0	42.1
Punt Returns-Yards	6-83	3-38
Interceptions-Yards	1-8	1-31
Fumble Returns-Yards	1-7	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	1-29	3-59
Possession Time	35:55	24:05

Scoring

N — Eric Crouch 28-yard run (Josh Brown kick)
N — Sean Applegate 47-yard pass from Bobby Newcombe (Brown kick)
N — Newcombe 1-yard run (Brown kick)
N — Newcombe 5-yard run (Brown kick)
N — Crouch 6-yard run. (Brown kick)
N — Crouch 21-yard run (Brown kick)
I — Tim Dodge 10-yard blocked punt return (Tim Douglass kick)

Att. — 70,397
 Temp. — 85

Individual Statistics

Nebraska

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Alexander, D.	15	95	6.3	24	0
Crouch, E.	5	92	18.4	35	3
Evans, D.	13	69	5.3	22	0
Newcombe, B.	15	35	2.3	12	2
Buckhalter, C.	3	22	7.3	10	0
Perino, J.	2	13	6.5	8	0
Kingston, B.	3	12	4.0	11	0
Miller, W.	2	6	3.0	3	0
Diedrick, D.	2	5	2.5	3	0
Uhlir, T.	1	4	4.0	4	0
Applegate, S.	1	-6	-6.0	0	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Newcombe, B.	7-10-1	70.0	128	1
Crouch, E.	10-15-1	66.7	68	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Davison, M.	4	69	17.3	38	0
Wistrom, T.	2	32	16.0	30	0
Applegate, S.	1	47	47.0	47	1
Golliday, A.	1	24	24.0	24	0
DeBates, T.J.	1	18	18.0	18	0
McKee, J.	1	6	6.0	6	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Hadenfeldt, D.	3	132	44.0	54
Team	1	0	0.0	0

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Craver, K.	5	63	12.6	18	0
Henderson, L.	1	20	20.0	20	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Stella, R.	1	29	29.0	29	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Brown, M.	5	3	8	0	0	0
Wills, A.	4	1	5	1-1	0	0
Polk, C.	3	2	5	1-8	0	1-8
Vedral, M.	4	0	4	0	0	0
Johnson, E.	4	0	4	0	0	0
Ortiz, T.	2	2	4	0	0	0
Kaiser, L.	3	0	3	1-5	0	1-5
Warren, S.	2	1	3	1-9	0	1-9
Kaiser, L.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Warren, S.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Groce, D.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Gehman, T.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Hamje, J.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Craver, K.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Lohr, J.	2	0	2	1-2	0	0
Shaw, B.	2	0	2	0	0	0
VandenBosch, K.	1	0	1	1-1	0	0
Kelsay, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Jackson, J.	1	0	1	0	1-8	0
Buettgenback, B.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Finley, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0
List, G.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Gibson, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Butler, C.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Brown, R.	0	1	1	0	0	0

Iowa

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Betts, L.	15	73	4.9	15	0
Allen, J.	1	2	2.0	2	0
Thein, R.	3	2	0.7	2	0
Crockett, R.	3	0	0.0	3	0
McCann, K.	4	-20	-5.0	2	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
McCann, K.	11-27-1	28.9	112	0
Mullen, S.	0-3-0	00.0	0	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Kasper, K.	5	58	11.6	31	0
Oliver, C.	2	22	11.0	11	0

Wheatley, A.	2	13	6.5	8	0
Flemister, Z.	1	15	15.0	15	0
Betts, L.	1	4	4.0	4	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Baker, J.	12	505	42.1	57

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Oliver, C.	2	1	0.5	1	0
Dodge, T.	0	10	10.0	10	1
Miller, D.	1	27	27.0	27	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Oliver, C.	3	59	19.7	25	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Holman, T.	7	2	9	0	0	0
Bowen, M.	6	1	7	0	0	0
Kampman, A.	6	1	7	1-2	0	0
Davison, D.	5	2	7	1-1	0	0
Montgomery, J.	3	4	7	1-1	0	0
Brown, M.	6	0	6	0	0	0
Dolezal, M.	5	1	6	0	0	0
Herron, A.	4	2	6	2-11	0	1-5
Hall, S.	4	1	5	0	0	0
Miller, D.	4	1	5	0	0	0
Woods, L.	3	2	5	1-1	0	0
Stockdale, M.	2	3	5	0	1-31	0
Pospisil, S.	2	2	4	0	0	0
Slattery, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Meyer, R.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Brown, C.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Barr, F.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Cole, C.	1	1	2	1-8	0	1-8
Baker, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Wilson, V.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Kasper, K.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Nelson, B.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Allen, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Peterson, T.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Johnson, D.J.	0	1	1	0	0	0



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CAPTAINS

No one questions the determination of Adam Julch. He's in his second season as Nebraska's starter at left offensive tackle. But this is the first in which he has been reasonably healthy.

Health is relative for Julch, who endures the aches and pains of a physically demanding game, the same as everyone else. But last season was unique in what he had to endure.

"He was hurting," said line-mate Russ Hochstein. "He played with a lot of pain. It shows he wanted to play because he played with that pain. And he played well with it."

If Hochstein had any doubts before, he doesn't now.

"Adam has a big heart and a big mind," he said.

The problems stemmed from spasms associated with ruptured disks in his back and the lingering effects of a dislocated right ankle suffered in the Red-White game the previous spring.

Even though Julch was considerably less than full-speed, he started all but the Colorado game. By his own estimation, he was never more than 75-percent healthy on a good day.

"It's hard to guess a percentage," he said.

To make matters worse, the back problem limited his workouts in the weight room. "If you don't lift during the season, your strength's going to go down a lot," he said. Which it did.

"You could feel yourself getting fatter if you don't lift as often. We don't do a building-type lifting during the season. We maintain. I was pretty much going downhill as far as my strength."

As a result, he couldn't always make the plays he expected himself to make.

"I don't know if it was more (in) my mind that I couldn't do it," he said. "But my right foot just wouldn't work the way I wanted it to. So last year was real frustrating for me all-around."

After the Holiday Bowl loss to Arizona, Julch decided to have surgery to clean up the ankle. He figured he could rest his aching back while he was rehabilitating



T.J. DeBates



Adam Julch

the ankle.

He decided against back surgery, which he underwent when he was a freshman because "this time I didn't think I could play and have the surgery," he said. "So I just decided to rest it."

Besides, "even with the surgery there was a chance something more could happen."

Even though he couldn't participate during the spring, Julch didn't skip practice. He was like an assistant coach, helping the young linemen and learning "a lot" as he did.

Considering his commitment, it came as no surprise that Julch was among the four seniors chosen as Cornhusker co-captains for this season. He is joined by tight end T.J. DeBates as the offensive captains, while defensive backs Ralph Brown and Mike Brown are the defensive captains.

Reporters who cover Nebraska on a daily basis regarded Julch as a lock to be a captain. But his election in a vote

of his teammates was "a big shock, a big surprise," he said. "I mean, it was kind of in my mind. I was like: 'I hope that happens.' But you never really know. I don't really know what to say."

"I feel blessed. I feel honored and thankful."

Julch is the only captain from Nebraska. He's an Omaha Burke graduate. Ralph Brown is from Hacienda Heights, Calif. Mike Brown is from Scottsdale, Ariz. And DeBates is from Stewartville, Minn. — he was born in O'Neill, Neb., but his family moved before he was old enough to remember.

Being a captain isn't any more meaningful for a Nebraskan, said the soft-spoken DeBates. "No matter where you're from, you're part of this team. Everybody's one group. I don't think it's a big deal at all. We've all put in our time, paid our dues. I don't think it came easy for any of us."

Though success didn't come easily for Ralph Brown, he has started every game since he arrived at Nebraska in 1996. Counting bowls and the Iowa opener, he has 40 consecutive starts.

He is easily the most experienced Cornhusker, and consequently, a logical choice as a captain. Nevertheless, "I tried not to put too much into that captain thing because sometimes it becomes a popularity contest, or it can be used for the wrong reasons," he said.

"I don't think any of the guys were expecting it or thinking about it," said Mike Brown. "We're just worried about going out every day and practicing hard and getting better."

"That's all the focus, all 18 players, just focusing on one thing."

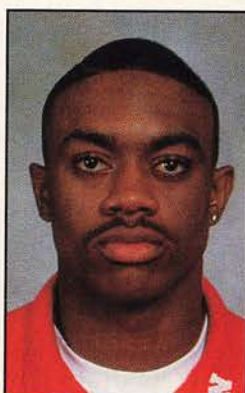
That one thing is the next opponent, in this case California.

Coach Frank Solich, himself a Cornhusker co-captain for Bob Devaney in 1965, emphasized the importance of leadership to a team's success. It's "vital," he said.

However, "the problem with electing captains is, you know that there are also other guys, guys who got a fair number of votes, who could have also been



Mike Brown



Ralph Brown

great captains for us.

"Leadership has got to come from more than just your captains."

Strongside linebacker Tony Ortiz, one of several seniors on defense, understands that.

Julch, DeBates and the Browns "are great choices for captains, great leaders on and off the field, great character, great people, the kind of people you want leading your team," said Ortiz.

"Those are the kind of people you want representing your team."

But that doesn't mean he will abdicate his responsibility. As a senior, "I know what it takes to win a national championship," he said. "And there are other seniors on this team who have those qualities as well, whether they're captains or not. We have guys with a lot of love and passion for the game."

The key is being willing to accept constructive criticism from teammates as well as from coaches. That characteristic separates Nebraska's program from a lot of others, Ortiz said.

"I think everybody here has humbled themselves to take criticism from each other. That's all about team play, when a person like myself can take criticism from somebody else or vice versa.

"There's nothing wrong with that. I did something wrong. Let's correct it. I appreciate the help. Let's do for each other. It's not about me. It's about the team. That's kind of the focus we have."

As with the other captains, Julch intends to lead by example, and possibly on occasion a few well-chosen words. "I've always been kind of a little fiery," he said.

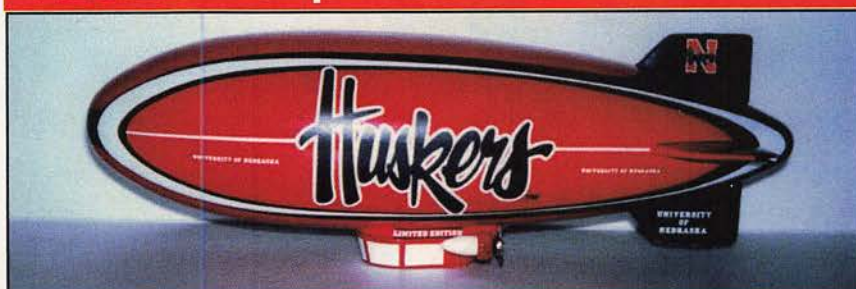
But, as the cliché goes, actions speak louder than words. Being a captain "gives you the responsibility to come out every day and try your hardest because if people see you slacking, then they think they can slack too, or not try as hard," said Julch. "It puts a huge responsibility on my shoulders to not allow myself to look tired, to look like I'm not into practice or something like that."

Even with the pain, Julch never allowed himself to relax last season.

But there was a change in his demeanor throughout summer conditioning and during fall camp — though he was forced to miss some practice after suffering a hyperextended elbow. "All summer you could see it coming," Hochstein said. "He had a smile on his face, the attitude, the excitement."

Being elected co-captain just heightened that excitement. ■

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**[From James A. Michener's
novel "Hawaii"]**

Junior Tagoa'i dumped water over his head to cool off following the next-to-last practice of two-a-days in late August. "I didn't think it would be this hot," he said. "This is unbelievable."

Tagoa'i smiled. He knew he would have to adjust to Nebraska's weather when he signed a football letter-of-intent with the Cornhuskers in February. "But I didn't expect this," he said.

"Lucky thing. If I didn't come early, I would be dying."

The problem, he said, was "too much sun, not enough wind."

Toniū Fonoti, another freshman, agreed. The weather was a consideration in coming to Nebraska. "Just standing here, I'm sweating," he said. "They told me it would be hot, but it's even worse."

Like Tagoa'i, Fonoti arrived on campus in early June to begin preparing for his first collegiate season. "I was just devastated by the heat," he said. "I thought Hawaii was hot."

Fonoti and Tagoa'i are from Hau'ula, Hawaii, on the north shore of Oahu. They are the third and fourth Hawaiian football players the Cornhuskers have recruited in the last three years.

Sophomore Dominic Raiola, the starting center, was the first. "Dominic paved a way for us," said redshirted freshman Tony Tata, a back-up middle linebacker. "I give him credit, thank him for that."



Scott Bruhn

By Mike Babcock

Tata, Raiola and Tagoa'i are graduates of St. Louis School in Honolulu. Fonoti is from Kahuku High, near his home in Hau'ula. He attended El Camino High in Oceanside, Calif., as a junior.

His parents sent him to California, where he lived with relatives, in order to get more recruiting exposure. They "thought I wasn't getting enough where I was at," Fonoti said.

"I didn't even think they were going to do it, (that they were) just scaring me."

His parents were serious, however, and their plan worked. Nebraska first contacted him while he was at El Camino High, and the Cornhuskers' interest continued after he returned to Hawaii.

Fonoti grew up in Western Samoa, a small island country located in the South Pacific, about halfway between New Zealand and Hawaii. "I lived in the forest," he said. "It's all in the boonies."

His family moved to Hawaii when he was about 10-years-old.

Tagoa'i and Tata lived in American Samoa, in the same small village. But Tagoa'i moved to Seattle not long before Tata arrived at the village from Hawaii, where he was born.

People live in huts in his "country village," said Tata, who returned there during the summer to visit his mom, whom he hadn't seen for "about five years." They do not live in huts in Hawaii, however.

He and Tagoa'i both have been asked that.

"I tell them, what, you've never seen Hawaii Five-0?" Tagoa'i said.

"I say, we're the same as Nebraska," said Tata. "We've got big cities."

Oahu, the third largest of Hawaii's eight islands, is far and away the most populous, with nearly 1 million people living in the growing Honolulu metropolitan area.

The misconceptions about Hawaii abound, according to Tata. One of his Cornhusker teammates, who will remain nameless, "didn't even believe we were a state," he said. "That flipped me out."



Nebraska's four players from Hawaii are (from left) freshman defensive tackle Junior Tagoa'i, sophomore center Dominic Raiola, freshman guard Toniu Fonoti and freshman linebacker Tony Tata.

Players from 50th State Have Hot Time in Lincoln

For the record, Hawaii became the 50th state in 1959.

Tagoa'i doesn't take offense at such uninformed questions.

After all, "I didn't know about here," he said of Nebraska. "I expected a desert. They said the school was going to be in the middle of corn. So I figured it was going to be like corn on all sides."

Fonoti, an offensive lineman, and Tagoa'i, a defensive lineman, have attracted considerable attention, not so much because they are from Hawaii but rather because of they are exceptionally large.

They were among six Cornhusker freshmen measured at 250 or more pounds of lean body mass or muscle. Fonoti stands 6-foot-4 and weighs 329 pounds. Tagoa'i is 6-3 and 303.

Fonoti made "great progress" during

Nebraska's summer conditioning program, according to Boyd Epley, the director of athletic performance. He gained 9.2 pounds but reduced his percentage of body fat from 18.9 to 15.8, which translates into an 18-pound gain in lean body mass.

Fonoti is only the second-biggest freshman, however. Dan Waldrop, a 6-5, 336-pound offensive tackle from Wilmington, Calif., is the largest freshman Epley "can ever remember reporting."

Waldrop was born in Pago Pago, American Samoa.

"I'm average (size for a Samoan)," Tagoa'i said tongue-in-cheek.

He attributed the size to diet, specifically taro, an edible root high in starch. "It's like a potato but thicker, real thick," said Tagoa'i. "It's like biting into

a rock."

Taro is among the things he misses about Samoa. "We're working on getting some mailed here," he said. "You have to get it from our island. That's pretty much the only place it grows."

Coconuts also grow there, of course, and for his biographical capsule in the Cornhusker football media guide, Fonoti listed "husking coconuts" among his hobbies.

Actually, husking coconuts was more of a chore than a hobby, according to Fonoti. He did it when his dad was cooking and told him to. It took him about 30 minutes to husk 20 coconuts.

The process isn't difficult, except for beginners. "If you don't know how to do it, you'll be there for a while," said Tagoa'i, who also claims extensive

A Warm Reception

Dominic Raiola was Nebraska's first football scholarship recruit from Hawaii. But the sophomore center would have been the second if a scholarship had been available for Olin Kreutz, a consensus All-American at Washington in 1997 and now the starting center for the NFL's Chicago Bears.

Kreutz, Raiola's best friend and high school teammate in Honolulu, wanted to come to Nebraska. "We had a commitment if we had a scholarship," Cornhusker assistant George Darlington said.

When Kreutz was a senior at St. Louis School, an assistant coach there contacted Nebraska to say that Kreutz "was really interested" in playing for the Cornhuskers. Because Nebraska had never recruited Hawaii, "it was a matter of my not following up quickly enough," said Darlington.

Kreutz was willing to commit "without even a visit," Darlington said. But by the time the coaches evaluated film of Kreutz, the allotment of scholarships had been filled.

"Why was Olin Kreutz interested in Nebraska? I don't know. All I know is, if we had jumped on him earlier and offered him (a scholarship) . . . it wasn't a matter of film evaluation."

Kreutz, who left Washington a year early for the NFL, was a senior when Raiola was a sophomore at St. Louis, the oldest and largest private school for boys in Hawaii. The school's football program is directed by Cal Lee, the winningest prep coach in state history with a record of 201-28-4 (.878).

St. Louis has won 13 consecutive large-schools state championships.

The championship is determined in the Prep Bowl at Aloha Stadium. Last season St. Louis defeated Kahuku 28-20 in the annual game. Cornhusker freshmen Tonia Fonoti and Junior Tagoa'i lined up against each other in the game. Fonoti played for Kahuku, Tagoa'i for St. Louis.

St. Louis opened this season with an 82-14 victory against a team from Alaska. "It's kind of a blue-collar school," said Darlington, who also recruited redshirted freshman Tony Tata from there. "They have fine coaches, but their facilities are nothing to write home about.

"They've got one practice field and a little dinky area where they lift weights. But they've got great tradition. There's a great following of high school football in Honolulu and (on) Oahu.

"I think the quality of football in the top league is pretty good."

When St. Louis plays rival Kamehameha High

School at Aloha Stadium, "they might have 20,000 people," he said. "For the Prep Bowl, they might have 30,000 people."

Darlington recruited and coached in Hawaii when he was an assistant at San Jose State. He and the other members of the San Jose State staff were fired after the Hawaii game there in 1972. But the distance from Hawaii to West Coast Athletic Conference schools wasn't quite as great as it is from Nebraska.

Because of that distance, as well as the difference in weather, the Cornhuskers never considered recruiting in Hawaii. "I guess it goes back to the old saying: You can't assume anything," Darlington said. "You can't assume that for whatever reason, fill in the blanks, this player, or these players, from this area won't come (to Nebraska). You've got to take your shots, and you never know."

Former coach Tom Osborne was understandably skeptical of the value of recruiting in Hawaii. "I think all of us were for a long time," said Darlington. "In fact, it kind of corresponds with Tom's reaction when (Bob) Devaney decided: Hey, we've got to recruit kids in California."

The Cornhuskers began recruiting California aggressively after 6-4 seasons in 1967 and 1968. Those efforts contributed to the national championship teams in 1970 and 1971.

"I think at the time, the attitude was the same: There's no way we can get a kid to come from sunny southern California (to Nebraska)," Darlington said. "But 200 or 300 athletes later . . ."

The Cornhuskers were well-received from the beginning in Hawaii.

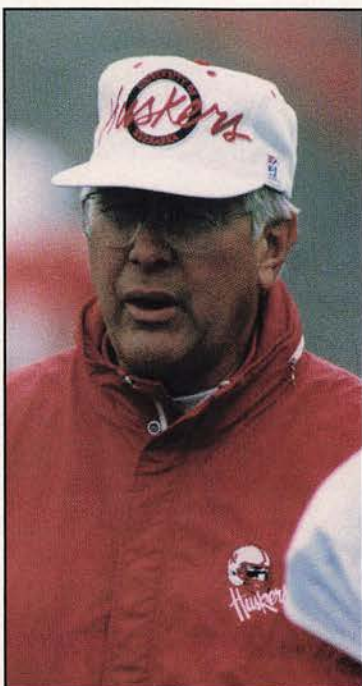
Tagoa'i, like the others, was familiar with the Cornhuskers' tradition. When Nebraska first contacted him, "I thought they had put the wrong name on the letter," he said. "I didn't think it was (meant for) me. That was my first choice. Once they asked me, I wanted to go there."

Tata picked Nebraska because the program "sounded like our program at St. Louis, with unity, a great team and a winning tradition. Those are the main factors I came here," he said.

Washington recruited Raiola and "tried to get (Kreutz) to put a lot of heat on Dominic to come to Washington," said Darlington. "I don't know how much heat he put on, quite frankly.

"I'm sure he tried to get him (Raiola) to come to Washington in one respect. But in another respect, he still felt that (Nebraska) was the place he wanted to be out of high school.

"You can't put any rhyme or reason to that." ■



George Darlington recruited and coached in Hawaii when he was an assistant at San Jose State.

experience performing the task.

Although they're a good eight hours of flying time from home, Nebraska's Hawaiian players can find Hawaiian-style meals just 50 miles up Interstate 80, at the Omaha home of Cornhusker teammates Aaron and Colin Wills, who are of Polynesian-Hawaiian descent.

Aaron quickly befriended Raiola, and "he started coming home with me," Aaron said. "Now my family and his family are really good friends. I refer to his mom and dad as my aunt and uncle.

"My mom loves Dominic. Then those new guys came in and we really took them under our wings, too, took them to our house, showed them there is a Hawaiian home away from the real Hawaii."

Raiola has long since overcome any homesickness and never had problems adjusting to the weather, he said, because his mom is from New York City and he regularly visited there as a youngster.

Nebraska's weather, even the winter's cold, doesn't bother him. "I kind of like it," he said with a smile. "It's kind of nice to have cool weather. You don't sweat as much walking to class."

Raiola "told me when it gets cold, it gets really cold," said Tata, whose interest in Nebraska's football and educational support programs precluded any climate concerns he might have had. "I hadn't experienced four-seasons weather. It was a new experience for me. But I didn't care about the weather."

Fonoti and Tagoa'i got an insight into the cold when they made their recruiting visit.

"I had to put on two jackets just to keep warm," Fonoti said.

As with the others, however, "weather was no factor," he told reporters after a practice in Cook Pavilion. "I just cared what the program was like and the academics. (Other schools) tried to bring it up, but I never paid attention. Actually, I like cold weather. I don't sweat as much as I am now."

To Nebraskans, it probably seems ironic that student-athletes from a tropical climate such as Hawaii's would be concerned about the heat and humidity of a Nebraska summer. But that was among the only things about which he was hesitant when he arrived in June, Tagoa'i said.

The explanation is simple, he added: "We don't have trade winds here."

Fonoti agreed with his roommate. "Maybe it's because there aren't any trade winds," he said. That's why, more than once during the summer conditioning program, "I was burning up." ■

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'Sutton Comet'

An Early Star

*Bender set standard
for future backs
at Nebraska*

By Mike Babcock

The season is unique in Nebraska football history: nine victories, nine shutouts, no losses. The year was 1902. And the coach of the newly named Cornhuskers was Walter Cowles Booth.

Booth, whose nickname was "Bummy," had arrived in 1900 from Princeton, which had graduated him and where he had played football. He would earn a law degree at Nebraska while coaching the football team, a responsibility for which he was paid approximately \$600 his first year.

The 1903 student yearbook, *The Sombbrero*, was dedicated to Booth's 1902 team, because it had "done so much to bring our institution before the people of the Middle West."

Included among the nine victories was Nebraska's first against mighty Minnesota, 6-0 at Minneapolis in mid-October. The significance of that victory, and the season for that matter, has been lost in time. To put it in perspective, however, Nebraska lost 15 of the first 19 games in the Minnesota series.

The 1902 team featured right halfback Johnny Bender, a "darting, dodging, hip-swinging . . . waspy little guy," Omaha World-Herald sports editor Frederick Ware wrote.

Bender earned four letters in baseball and ran the 100 and 220 on the track team in addition to his achievements on the football field. He set the standard by which subsequent Cornhusker ball carriers would be measured. He was known as "Twister" and the "Sutton Comet."

The former nickname was for his running style, the latter for his hometown.



Johnny Bender earned four letters in baseball and ran the 100 and 220 on the track team in addition to his achievements on the football field

Bender scored the touchdown (worth five points) in the 1902 victory at Minnesota, going into the end zone, untouched, from less than a yard away near the end of the second 35-minute half.

Huskers Illustrated Team of the Decade, 1900-09

End	W.N. "Bill" Johnson (1900-04-05)
End	James B. Harvey (1907-08)
Line	Charles T. Borg (1902-03-04-05)
Line	John Westover (1897-99-01-02)
Line	Bill Chaloupka (1907-08)
Line	Sidney T. Frum (1907-08)
Line	John G. Mason (1904-05-06)
Back	Maurice Benedict (1902-03-04-05)
Back	Johnny Bender (1900-01-02-03-04)
Back	John Weller (1905-06-07)
Back	Oren A. Beltzer (1907-08-09)
Kicker	Maurice Benedict (1902-03-04-05)

TEAMS OF THE DECADE

First in a series
(1900-1909)

Maurice Benedict, who directed the winning effort at quarterback, added the extra-point kick.

The 151-pound Benedict was among many players on those early Nebraska teams who came from Lincoln High School. Like Bender, he was a multi-sport athlete with a "reputation among the best on the Western gridiron," according to the student newspaper, *The Daily Nebraskan*.

The captain of the 1902 team was John Westover, who played tackle and also served as an assistant to Booth. An entry in the 1907 student yearbook claimed "there was no greater Western tackle than John Westover," who would become a prominent steel contractor in Lincoln.

The 1902 season, Westover's last as a player (though he continued to coach), was the first for another outstanding lineman, Charlie Borg, the first of Nebraska's great centers. The *Daily Nebraskan* reported that the 195-pound Borg was "acknowledged to be the peer of any center in the West."

Borg earned a bachelor's degree in 1903 and continued playing as a law student.

Minnesota was an original member of the Western Conference, fore-runner of the Big Ten and the most prominent athletic conference outside of the East Coast, where the Ivy League dominated.

Any credibility Nebraska hoped to have depended on its performance against Minnesota, which is why an electronic sign atop a campus building continued to flash the 6-0 score two years later.

The 1903 Cornhuskers won 10 games, including eight by shutout, without a loss to extend a winning streak begun in 1901 to 22 games. The streak would increase to 24 before a 6-0 loss at Colorado in 1904. Nebraska also



The Nebraska Football Legacy

Two of the key players on the 1902 Nebraska team were John Westover (left) and Maurice Benedict.

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Huskers Picked in North

Nebraska had just one player on the preseason All-Big 12 team but was picked to win the North Division in a poll released by the league Wednesday in advance of its annual two-day media gathering with players and coaches.

FULL STORY

RECRUITING

Current High School seniors have already chosen NU, including Chris Septak, a 6-4 Tight End from Millard.

FULL STORY

OTHER NEWS

Nebraska center Venson Hamilton, the Big 12 player of the year, was drafted late in the second round of the NBA Draft by the Houston Rockets.

FULL STORY

WITASY CUP

finally...

won three exhibitions against Lincoln High during the streak.

Passion for Cornhusker football is hardly a recent phenomenon. Despite a 7-3 record in 1904, Booth fell out of favor with some fans and nearly resigned as a result. He remained at Nebraska for the 1905 season, however, in part because of rumors that his successor would come from Yale.

Being a Princeton man, he couldn't tolerate that. After he did resign in 1905, in order to practice law in New York City, he was replaced by Amos Foster, a graduate of Dartmouth.

In addition to Benedict and Borg, Bill Johnson, John Mason and John Weller were among the players on Booth's last team. Johnson and Mason came from Lincoln High, Weller from Seward.

The 153-pound Johnson was among Nebraska's earliest African-American student-athletes. His "speed and quickness have made secure his position," the Daily Nebraskan reported.

Weller, who established himself on the varsity with a stellar performance against Illinois in the final game of the 1904 season, weighed 180 pounds and played tackle as well as halfback.

Mason, though lighter, also played both in the line and the backfield. His final season was the first, and last, for Thomas, who left to practice law in Cincinnati after coaching Nebraska to a 6-4 record.

Thomas was replaced by William C. "King" Cole, who would lead the Cornhuskers into the Missouri Valley Conference and finish out the decade before resigning, also under pressure.

Among the most prominent players on Cole's early teams were Oren A. "Buck" Beltzer, for whom Nebraska's baseball stadium is named, James B. Harvey, Sidney T. Frum and Bill Chaloupka, a tackle from Wilber, Neb., who still shares school single-game records for touchdowns and points.

Chaloupka scored 36 points, on six touchdowns and six conversions, in an 85-0 victory against Doane College in 1907. The game was the last to be played on the field that preceded Nebraska Field. Both ran east and west and were located just to the south of where Memorial Stadium is now.

Cole's record in four seasons at Nebraska was 25-8-3, with one conference championship and a share of another. But his record against Minnesota was an unacceptable 0-3-1.

At least Booth had managed to coach one victory against Minnesota in five tries — Minnesota was so upset about the loss in 1902 that it didn't

The 1903 student yearbook, *The Sombrero*, was dedicated to Booth's 1902 team, because it had "done so much to bring our institution before the people of the Middle West."

schedule Nebraska in 1903.

Booth raised Nebraska, which competed without a conference affiliation during his coaching tenure, "from a second-rate team among those of the Missouri Valley to a position where

even the leaders of the (Western) Conference look upon her as an opponent to be feared," the student newspaper reported.

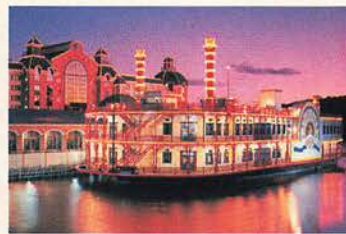
But then as now, the attitude was: What have you done lately? ■

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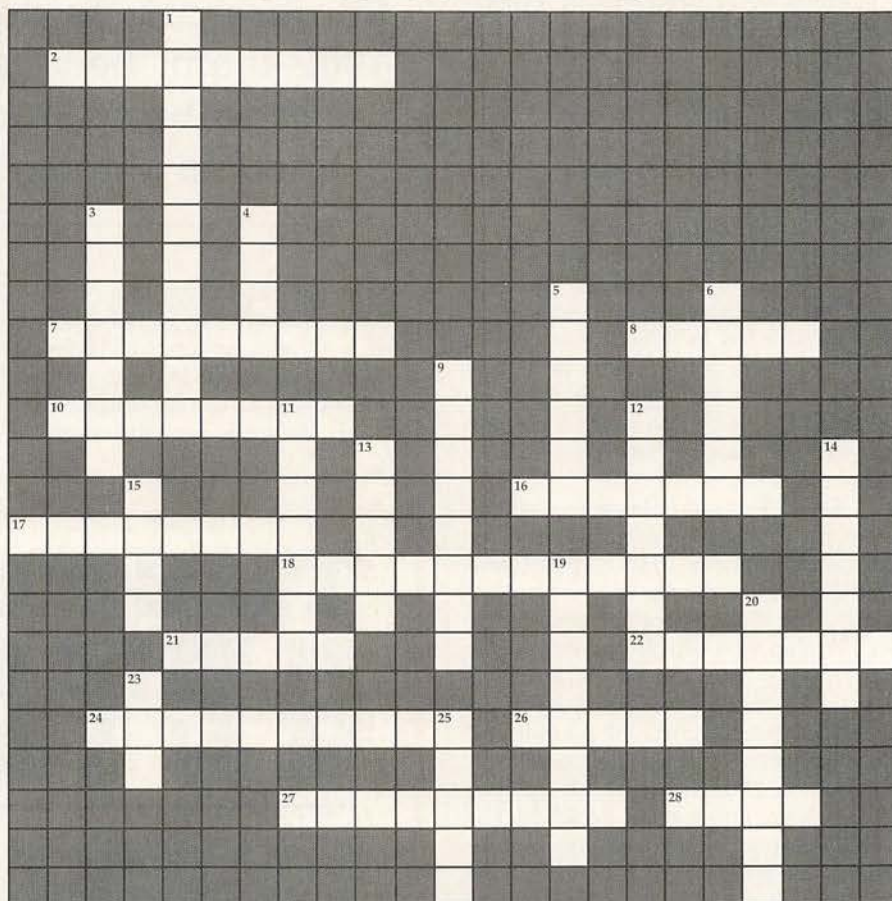
ACROSS

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This Week in Husker History

September 5

1987 — Rod Smith and Dana Brinson each return a punt for a touchdown to tie a Big Eight record and help offset five Nebraska turnovers in a 56-12 victory against Utah State at Memorial Stadium. A defense led by Broderick Thomas and Neil Smith allows the Aggies a minus-1 yard rushing.

September 6

1986 — Sophomore quarterback Steve Taylor, starting for the first time at Nebraska, completes 10-of-18 passes for 130 yards and two touchdowns and rushes for 139 yards and one touchdown in a 34-17 victory against Florida State. The night game is the first ever played at Memorial Stadium.

September 7

1985 — Nebraska is its own worst enemy in a 17-13 loss to Florida State.

The Cornhuskers lose two fumbles and have one pass intercepted in losing for the second time in three games against Florida State at Memorial Stadium. The temperature on the artificial turf reaches 133 degrees.

September 8

1973 — The Cornhuskers provide Tom Osborne with a 40-13 victory against UCLA in his first game as head coach. Steve Runty plays quarterback for an injured Dave Humm. Tony Davis rushes for 147 yards and two touchdowns. And Randy Borg returns a punt 77 yards for a touchdown.

September 9

1972 — Efren Herrera kicked a 30-yard field goal with 22 seconds remaining at the Los Angeles Coliseum to give UCLA a 20-17 victory and end two-time defending national champion Nebraska's 32-game unbeaten streak

and 23-game winning streak. The Cornhuskers have six turnovers.

September 10

1977 — Despite gaining 470 yards of total offense, Nebraska fumbles three times inside Washington State's 10-yard line and loses to the Jack Thompson-led Cougars 19-10 at Memorial Stadium. The game marks the head coaching debut of former Cornhusker player and assistant Warren Powers.

September 11

1971 — The defending national champion Cornhuskers extend their unbeaten streak to 20 games and begin a run to a second national title with a 34-7 victory against Oregon at Memorial Stadium. Junior college transfer Gary Dixon scores three touchdowns. Oregon avoids a shutout when Bobby Moore, now Ahmad Rashad, scores a touchdown on a 7-yard run with 3:21 left. ■

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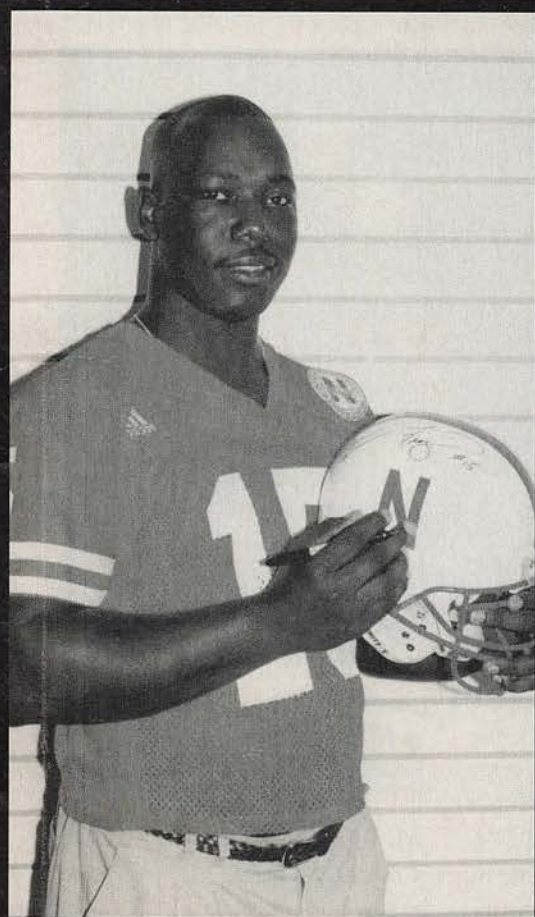
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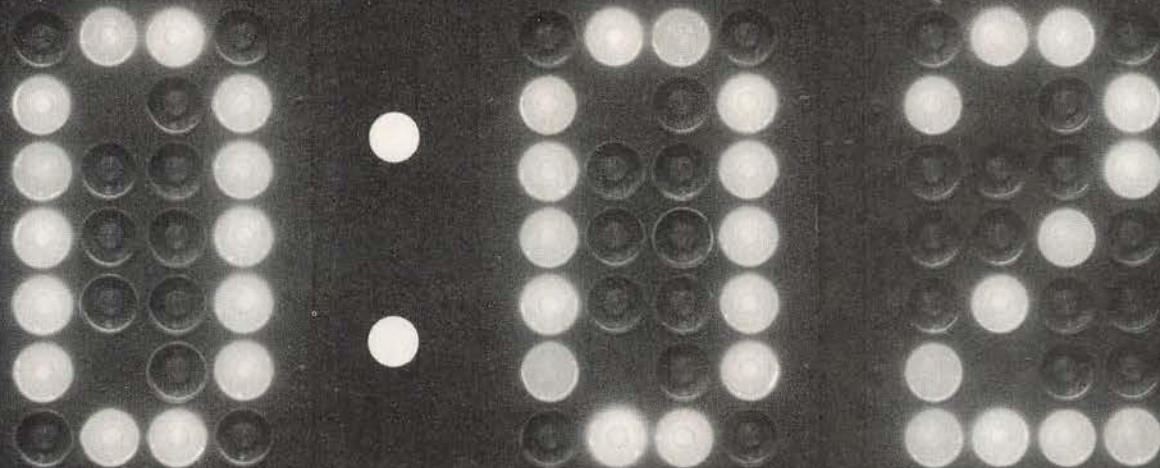
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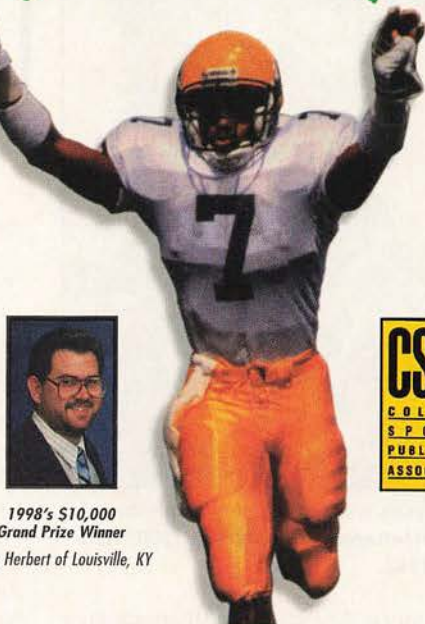
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Every Sack =1 point
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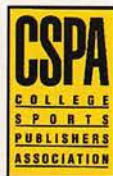
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Just Happy to Compete

Former Nebraska golfer and current coach remembers long road trips

Beaumont, Texas, is a long way from Lincoln, Neb. Check a map.

It's located in east Texas, near the Louisiana border on the Neches River, just a little more than an oil well's gush from the Gulf of Mexico. The best way to get there is to fly.

But when Robin Krapfl (then Scherer) and her teammates on the Nebraska women's golf team went to compete in Lamar University's annual spring-break tournament, they always rode to Beaumont in a 15-passenger, university-owned van, driven by then-coach Jerry Fischer.

The trip took 15 or 16 hours, maybe more. After so many miles on the road, no one in the van paid much attention to the time, except, perhaps, Fischer. The student-athletes were busy playing cards and learning about each other. "We discussed everyone's life," Krapfl said recently.

"We bonded as a team because we had to spend all that time together."

Once they arrived in Beaumont, as many as four of them might share a motel room. And if the room didn't have four beds, someone would have to sleep on a rollaway bed, or on the floor.

They wouldn't stay at the Hilton or the Ritz-Carlton — there isn't one in Beaumont, anyway.

"It wasn't always the best place," said Krapfl. "But it was all right."

And no one complained. "At that time, we didn't even think about it," she said. "That's just the way it was. It was all new. We were still competing in athletics, so it didn't really matter."

"We were just happy to be able to compete."

That was 20 years ago, not long after Nebraska began funding a women's golf team as a result of Title IX, which was passed by Congress in 1972 — and implemented slowly.

Krapfl, who is in her 13th season as the Husker women's golf coach, earned letters in 1980, 1981 and 1982, after transferring from Hastings College, where she played basketball as a freshman.



Nebraska women's golf coach Robin Krapfl lettered as a player in 1980, 1981 and 1982.

Among her basketball memories was a road trip to Colorado Springs, Colo., by bus.

After deciding Hastings College wasn't the place for her, she contacted Fischer, who had just replaced Larry Romjue as the women's coach, about joining the team. Fischer said fine. And that was it.

Krapfl paid her own way the first year, then got some scholarship money the second.

The value of a scholarship could be divided among several athletes, as is still the case in sports other than football, basketball and volleyball. But "we didn't ever think about scholarships back then," Krapfl said. "There was no distinction between those with scholarships and those without."

The players were happy to be issued a sleeve of golf balls to use when they played in tournaments, Krapfl said. "If you lost them, you had to crawl back to Jerry and beg for more."

She was being facetious, but only slightly. In any case, the situation is much different now.

"We have adidas clothes and shoes. They provide everything we need,"

25 YEARS

of Women's Athletics

In celebration of 25 years of women's athletics at Nebraska, Huskers Illustrated is featuring stories with Husker women student-athletes from the late 1970s and 1980s, remembering the way things were and discussing how things have changed.

she said.

Because Fischer was the club professional at the Country Club of Lincoln, the Huskers occasionally practiced there. But they played tournaments and matches at public courses, a situation that also has changed, in part as a result of the credibility the program has earned over time.

"Now we're at Firethorn, the Country Club, they're all very good about it," said Krapfl, who worked as a pro at the Country Club for Fischer and served as his assistant at Nebraska before succeeding him.

When Krapfl played, her teammates were mostly from Nebraska. Now "our recruiting is world-wide, I guess you could say," she said. Two current Huskers are from other countries.

Catha Fogelbert is from Sweden and Amanda Sutcliffe is from New South Wales. Five are from Nebraska, including Sarah Sasse, K.C. Elgert and Amy Roux from Lincoln. Elizabeth Bahensky is from Kearney. And Stephanie Schaffer from Columbus. Amanda Krane is from Wantagh, N.Y.

Krapfl has seen the annual budget for the women's golf team increase from about \$30,000 to more than \$100,000. It has competed in tournaments all over the country, from Arizona to Florida and even in Hawaii. So obviously, "we fly to most of our tournaments," she said.

The Huskers haven't gone to Beaumont over spring break for a long time.

But if they did, they would fly. "No van rides over four hours," said Krapfl.

She might not have minded then, but she certainly would now. ■

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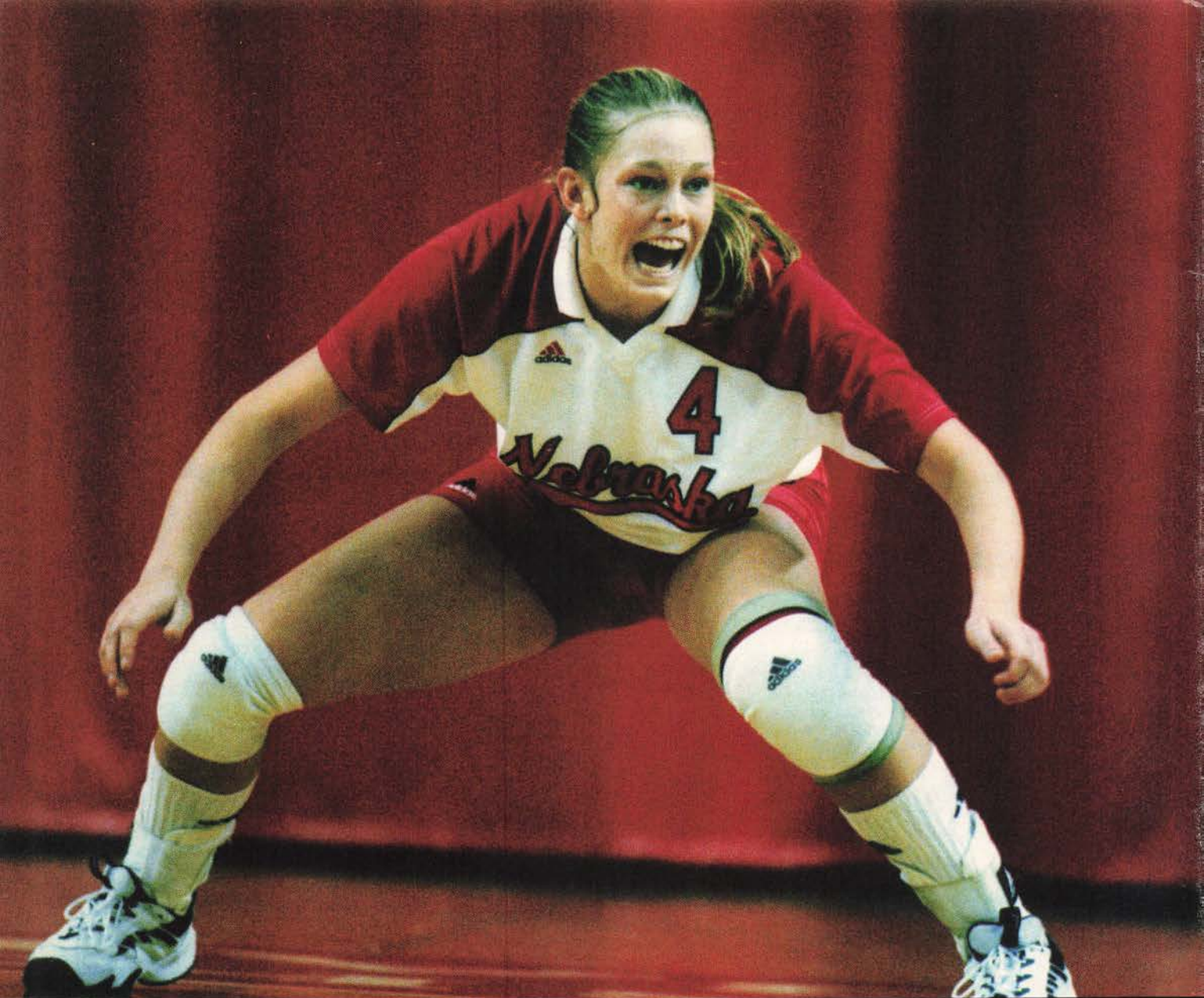
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Nebraska senior Mandy Monson has her sights set on another NCAA Final Four appearance.

She Hasn't Got Time for the Pain

SIDEOUT

Mandy Monson is in a battle for playing time, but the Nebraska senior plans to fight the urge to worry too much about herself this season.

A year ago, Monson was on a roller-coaster ride within the Nebraska volleyball program. A knee injury sidelined her for a time and battling back into the lineup was difficult given NU's talent and depth at the left-side hitter spots.

There's still a logjam with Angie Oxley and Kim Behrends again competing for playing time on the left side this fall, but Monson is concentrating only on improving herself and improving NU's chances to succeed as a team. Seeking their third trip to the Final Four in four seasons, the Huskers were tabbed third in the preseason national coaches' poll.

Nebraska was picked to repeat at Big 12 Conference champion.

"If I'm worrying about if I'm going to play or not, then I'm not doing the job that I need to do for our team to be good and for our team to be successful," said Monson, a high school standout in the tiny western Nebraska town of Wallace.

"Then I'm too focused on myself. That's not the kind of player I want to be."

Monson, however, did take time this summer to focus on herself and her own play. Fearful that tendinitis in her knee would diminish her senior season, she followed the advice of Associate Head Coach John Cook and looked into a San Diego-based physical therapy program for victims of chronic pain.

After spending six weeks rehabilitating next to other college athletes and even professional football, basketball and tennis stars, Monson resumed practice at NU by proclaiming she was pain free.

"I feel the best that I've ever felt before in my whole college career," Monson said. "I really needed something different for me physically and mentally. It worked for me, so I'm real happy."

So to are Cook and Nebraska Head Coach Terry Pettit, neither of whom has hesitated to say how critical a healthy Monson is to the Huskers' success this season. Cook said when at her best, she helps balance Nebraska's offense.

Monson first established herself

as a sophomore, leading the team in digs and ranking third behind All-American Lisa Reitsma and Megan Korver in kills that season.

When she was healthy a year ago, Monson dropped 11 kills in stellar back-to-back performances at Texas and Colorado that followed on the heels of Nebraska's only loss of the regular season. She continued to shine in the NCAA Tournament, recording a career-high 26 digs against Utah and a season-high 12 kills against Penn State in the national semifinals.

But by spring, the tendinitis was so bad Monson could barely walk. She sat out most practices, but did make the trip to San Diego for a weekend filled with spring exhibition matches. While there, she met therapist Pete Egoscue, founder of The Egoscue Method.

"I think she sensed that here's somebody who might be able to help her," said Cook, who first learned of the program while an assistant coach at Nebraska from 1988-90. Back then, the Huskers' Cris Hall sought relief from a reputed disk.

"She came back and I know was pain free for two years while I was here," Cook said. "Megan's been pain free and she worked out twice a day this summer. I think it was a big help."

Monson said she hardly picked up a volleyball while in San Diego for most of June and July. Instead she simply relearned how to get her body in a good — and healthy — position to do the moves specific to the sport she plays.

For Monson, that entails hitting, blocking, passing and serving. Combined, those talents make her one of Nebraska's most versatile and athletically gifted players.

This fall, she made it through two-a-days without interruption and now has her sights on returning to the beach in December. Not San Diego, but sunny Hawaii, the site for this year's NCAA Final Four.

"If you don't think you're going to make it to the Final Four, then what are you playing for?" asked Monson, one of four Nebraska seniors. "We're a good team and we made it to the Final Four last year."

"There's no reason why we shouldn't get to the Final Four and win a national championship this year." ■

**Nebraska senior
Monson healthy
after summer
rehabilitation**

By Todd Henrichs

Scott Bruhn

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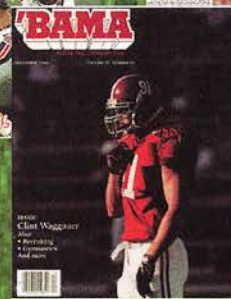
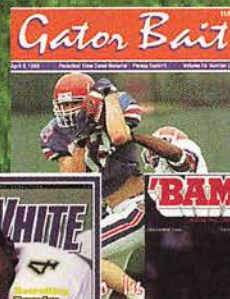
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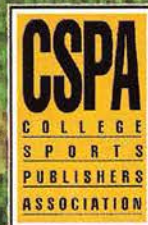
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NYB



Central Speedster Chooses Huskers

McPherson is latest in-state player to give his commitment

By James Hale

It's major news when a top in-state recruit doesn't stay home and play for Nebraska. It doesn't happen very often, but every once in a while, one of the top five players in Nebraska will elect to play his college football elsewhere. However, for the 2000 recruiting class thus far, the Cornhuskers are cleaning up in state.

The latest to commit to Nebraska is athlete Lornell McPherson, 5-foot-9, 175-pounder with 4.4 speed in the 40 yard dash out of Omaha (Central), Neb. He joins the athletic group of line-backer Ira Cooper of Omaha Westside, All-American tight end Chris Septak of Millard West, fullback Steve Kriewald of North Loup-Scotia and offensive lineman Mike Erickson of Papillion-LaVista as top in-state recruits who have agreed to sign with Nebraska on the first Wednesday in February.

McPherson is a three-year starter who was an option quarterback a year ago. This season, McPherson has switched to wingback, which is a likely position for him at Nebraska. He could also wind up at cornerback, where he has started for the past two seasons.

In McPherson's debut as a wingback in the season opener, he rushed seven times for 123 yards and three touchdowns on runs of 20, 35 and 39 yards.

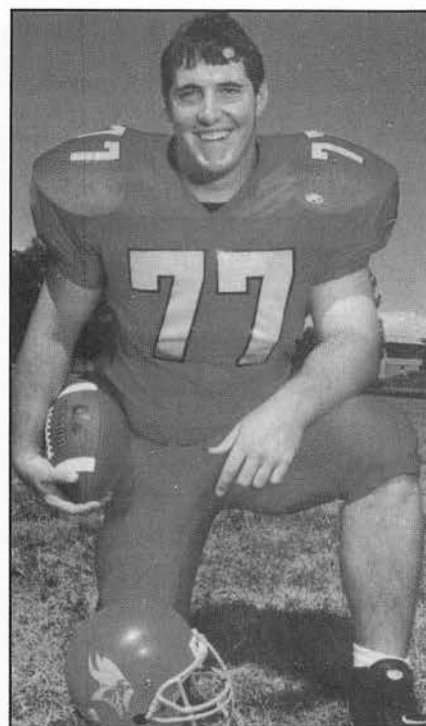
Despite his option quarterback heritage, McPherson realizes that he will

play at either wide receiver or cornerback for the Huskers.

"I haven't really played receiver in a long time, but I know I am not going to play quarterback at Nebraska," McPherson said. "I am not big enough to take the pounding that Nebraska quarterbacks take. I am not tall enough, either. So far, I really haven't caught the ball that much this season but feel that I have good hands and really want to stay on the offensive side of the ball. I don't mind playing cornerback either, and the Nebraska coaches have told me that I might play on defense. It really doesn't matter to me."

McPherson was undecided about where he wanted to go to college, until he talked recently with Nebraska Coach Frank Solich. That conversation included a personal offer of a scholarship won McPherson over.

"It was so great to talk with Coach Solich and hear what he really thought of me," McPherson said. "I had a lot of questions for him, too, and we had a fun conversation. I asked him where he thought I fit in at



Martin Flaum of Denver (Northglenn) is one of three offensive linemen who have committed to Nebraska.

Nebraska, and he assured me that they would try me where I wanted to play and also find the right position for me. Nebraska is a great school, and you can't beat their football program."

McPherson is another athlete that Nebraska impressed at its football camp. He also impressed Nebraska coaches with his 40 time. McPherson teamed with football teammate Ja'Maine Billups to win the state 400-meter relay title. Billups is also considering the Cornhuskers. ■

Commitments for 2000

Player	Hometown (high school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Ira Cooper	Omaha (Westside), Neb.	6-1 1/2	220	LB
Sandro DeAngelis	Buffalo, N.Y. (St. Joseph Coll.)	5-9	195	FB/K
Mike Erickson	Papillion (Papillion-LaVista), Neb.	6-4	260	OL
Martin Flaum	Denver (Northglenn), Colo.	6-5	290	OL
Steve Kriewald	North Loup-Scotia	5-11	250	FB
DeWayne Long Jr.	West Des Moines (Dowling) Iowa	6-1	205	FB
Lornell McPherson	Omaha (Central), Neb.	5-11	175	DB/WB
Josh Plisch	Rothschild, Wis.	6-4	290	OL
Jason Richenberger	Liberty, Mo.	6-3	210	LB
Chris Septak	Millard (West), Neb.	6-4	235	TE

Nebraska in Running for Tailbacks

Playing tailback at Nebraska is one of the marquee positions in college football. Every year, the Huskers draw immediate attention from some of the top prep running backs in the country.

Tatum Bell (5-11, 190, 4.45) of DeSoto, Texas, is the type of running

back who could win a Heisman Trophy at Nebraska. Bell has incredible speed, finishing sixth in the state 100-meter run with a clocking of 10.6. Bell carried the ball just 92 times last year, rushing for 682 yards and nine touchdowns. Throw in 10 catches for

101 yards, and Bell had a solid season as a junior.

Those numbers aren't eye-popping, but college coaches don't always look at just statistics. They study film, and with Bell, they see an athlete who explodes through a hole and races past

defenders on the corner, as well as a tough inside runner and a running back with good hands.

"I need to get more consistent with my running," Bell said. "I played pretty well a year ago but can play better. My goal is to have a huge year this season."

Bell camped at Texas A&M and Syracuse and grew up an Orange fan. However, his dad loves Nebraska the most, and that means a lot to Bell.

"My dad really likes Nebraska, and I like their winning tradition and the fact they go to a bowl every year," Bell said. "Nebraska probably has the lead right now, but I like several other schools as well."

Bell and his family made unofficial trips to Nebraska, Oklahoma State, Oklahoma, Kansas State, Miami and Colorado. At the moment Nebraska, Texas A&M, Miami and Colorado are his top schools.

Bell is not the only running back the Huskers are recruiting out of Texas. Tyson Thompson (6-2, 195, 4.4) of Irving (Nimitz) rushed for 2,121 yards a year ago, including 525 yards and seven touchdowns in one game. That set a Texas Class 5A state record.

Derick Arnold (6-2, 220, 4.5) of Houston (Milby) had his one-game record of 446 yards broken by Thompson. Arnold likes Michigan over Nebraska, Arizona, Florida State and Texas A&M.

Rashon Myles (6-2, 215, 4.4) of Dallas (Christian) is one of the most intriguing prospects in Texas. A year ago, Myles led his team to a state title, rushing for 1,825 yards and 29 TDs. Those numbers earned him district MVP honors. He topped things off winning the state 100-meter title with a clocking of 10.5. Myles can bench 330 and squat 490 and is still considering Oklahoma, Purdue, Nebraska, Colorado, Vanderbilt, Kentucky, SMU, Texas A&M, Baylor, Texas Tech and Texas.

Tyrell Dortch (5-11, 195, 4.4) of Hoboken, N.J., is the class of the East Coast and a top prospect on every recruiting board in the country. Dortch is considered the best running back prospect to come out of New Jersey in some time, and that is saying something considering standouts like Jamal Lewis and Ravon Anderson have recently come out of this area. Some compare him to Tony Dorsett, who starred at Pittsburgh and then with the Dallas Cowboys.

Dortch scorched defenses for 1,763

Big 12 Recruiting Update

OU Recruit's Death Shocks Town

By James Hale

When you are 18 years old, you believe you are going to live forever. We believe they are going to live forever. Who wouldn't love to be so full of life, vigor and a future with so much promise and hope?

Terrell Francis of Vian, Okla., had so much to live for, so much promise ahead of him, so much potential. Francis was a defensive end/tight end prospect out of a small Oklahoma town that every big time program in the country wanted to recruit. At 6-foot-5 and 247 pounds, he could run a 4.7 or better in the 40-yard dash, had great hands on offense and came up with 18 sacks a year ago on defense.

He was the perfect gentleman. He was the perfect recruit for all schools to recruit. What wasn't there to like, and he was a good student to boot?

Shockingly he's gone. Francis had felt ill for a couple of days but was told by his doctor that it was just fatigue and that he needed to get more rest. The next day after watching game film, he went home to get a nap before an evening practice, went to sleep and didn't wake up.

No one has been able to explain it. The mystery has rocked the small town.

Francis had given a silent commitment to Oklahoma back at their camp in June, however, he wouldn't go public with it. He wanted to take his visits hoping to take a teammate or two along with him so that they might earn a scholarship, too. Francis was that kind of guy.

Irony hits Sooners fans square in the face when you learn that one of the last things Francis said to his grandparents was to tell Coach (Jackie) Shipp that he was going to be a Sooner. Shipp is a former first-team All-Big Eight linebacker who coaches defensive tackles for the Sooners and who was responsible for recruiting Francis.

"This certainly puts life in perspective, doesn't it," Shipp said. "Recruiting doesn't seem important anymore. We work so hard and pray that we can sign a great young man like Terrell, and then, in a blink of an eye, realize that we will never talk to him again or see him play. We want to talk to him so badly, but know that we can't. This is so hard to take and understand. In fact I can't understand it and just wish..." ■

yards and 26 touchdowns a year ago and ran a 4.39 40 at a combine this summer. Add that to a 390-pound bench press and a 570-pound squat. His outstanding open-field ability makes him a franchise running back.

"I really like how Nebraska develops running backs," said Dortch, who is already thinking about his future. "Usually their starting tailbacks go to the NFL. That is nothing new with Nebraska. I want to get my choices down to five in the next three weeks and then really get into the recruiting process from there."

Dortch says he is still very open and is considering Ohio State, Florida, Florida State, Michigan State, Michigan, Georgia Tech, South Carolina, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Penn State and Iowa.

Diamond Ferri (5-10, 200, 4.5) of Everett, Mass., rushed for 1,441 yards and 21 TDs a year ago. Ferri easily has one of the best names in prep football. Ferri favors Nebraska over Syracuse, Boston College, Penn State, Wisconsin

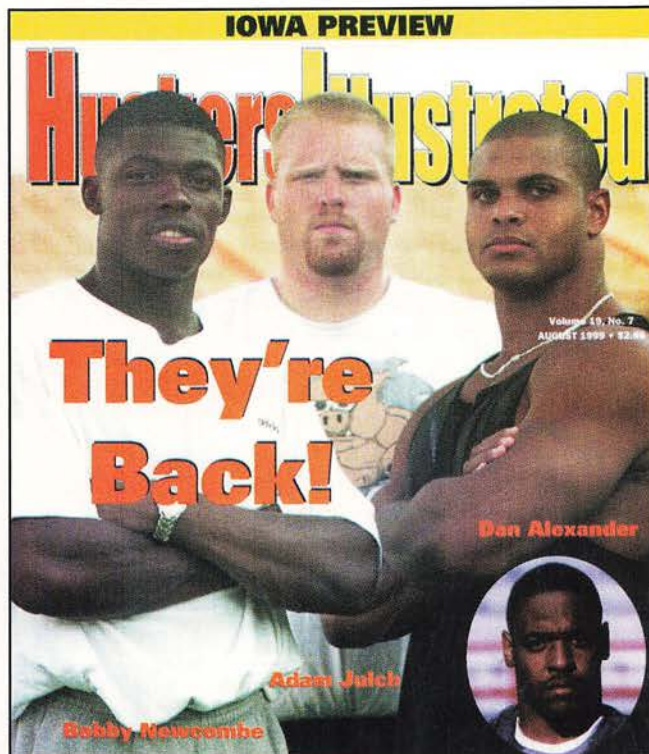
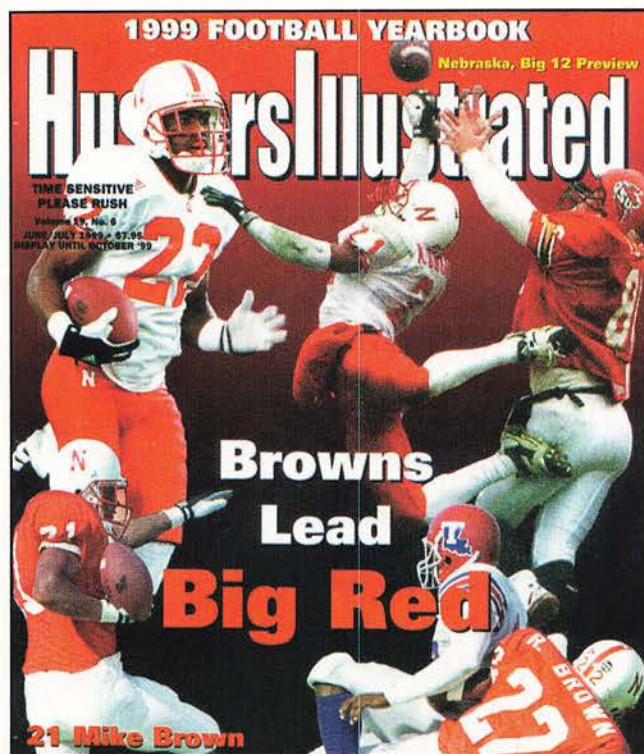
and Iowa.

Derrick Graves (6-2, 195, 4.5) of Tuscaloosa (Holt), Ala., is one of the better prospects in the south, after rushing for 2,314 yards and 31 touchdowns a year ago. In Holt's season opener, Graves rushed for 116 yards and two touchdowns and finished with 240 all-purpose yards. Graves has already set visits with Michigan and Auburn and is working on visits to Nebraska, Mississippi, Tennessee and possibly Arizona.

"I think Nebraska is pretty good," Graves said. "They have a special program and a great tradition at running back. Right now, I am leaning to Michigan. They are a team that I have loved for a long time."

Justin Green (6-1, 210, 4.7) of San Diego Union, Calif., earned his way onto the national recruiting map after rushing for 2,368 yards and 27 touchdowns a year ago. Green says he is leaning toward Notre Dame, with Texas, Arizona, UCLA, USC, Nebraska and Texas A&M on his list. ■

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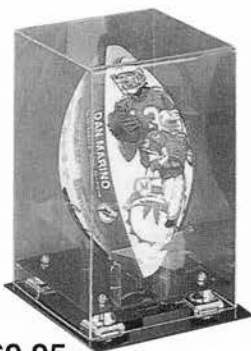
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There's No Escaping The Quarterback Question

*Even Nebraska's defensive players
are asked about Newcombe-Crouch competition*



**Mike
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DEFENSIVE TACKLE LORAN KAISER ate a submarine sandwich and talked to two or three writers following Nebraska's 42-7 opening-game victory at Iowa. The subject was quarterbacks.

"Overall, I thought we got to the quarterback pretty well," he said.

The Cornhuskers made life miserable for Iowa quarterback Kyle McCann, sacking him three times for 22 yards in losses.

Kaiser had one of the sacks. Steve Warren and Carlos Polk had the others.

Kaiser wasn't completely happy with his performance, however.

"I missed a bunch of tackles," he said.

A bunch, in this case, meant two.

Kaiser also offered an opinion on the controversy over whether Bobby Newcombe or Eric Crouch should be Nebraska's starting quarterback. Just about every Cornhusker who was interviewed after the game, whether he played offense or defense, was asked to comment on the situation.

That seemed to be a mandatory part of the post-game routine.

"Everybody wants to know what's happening," said Kaiser. "I guess Nebraska's not used to having two outstanding quarterbacks. Both of them have 'scoots.' And both of them have great arms."

As for which one should be starting, it doesn't really matter, Kaiser said.

I-back Dan Alexander, the Cornhuskers' leading rusher against Iowa, agreed.

"I don't think there's as much competition (between the two) as everybody thinks," he said. "They're both competitors. We're all competitors. I don't think there's any kind of tension, any reason for anybody to take sides. They both make a lot of big plays. They both make a lot of things happen."

Ironically, the last time Nebraska played at Iowa City it also had a quarterback controversy.

Senior Mark Mauer and junior Nate Mason had emerged from spring practice first and second on the depth chart, with sophomore Turner Gill and junior Bruce Mathison sharing third.

Mauer started and played most of a 10-7 upset loss to Iowa, which would go on to represent the Big Ten in the Rose Bowl. Mason started the next two games but suffered an ankle injury that would sideline him for the remainder of the season and enable Mauer to regain the starting job.

When the offense sputtered in the first half of the fourth game that season, against Auburn, then Coach Tom Osborne turned to Gill, who directed a rain-soaked 17-3 victory.

A week later, Gill started for the first time, throwing a

school record-tying four touchdown passes in a 59-0 victory against Colorado, and never relinquished the job — though he was sidelined for the final two games by a calf injury. Mauer returned to lead a 37-14 victory at Oklahoma. But the Cornhuskers lost to eventual national champion Clemson in the Orange Bowl game.

Gill returned as the starter the next season, not only because he was clearly Nebraska's best quarterback but also because a starter doesn't lose his position because of an injury.

Sound familiar? That policy has been in effect at Nebraska for a long time.

A "quarterback controversy" also isn't new to the Cornhuskers.

There was a debate over Fred Duda and Bob Churchich in the mid-1960s.

Jerry Tagge and Van Brownson shared the position for a time, before Tagge finally settled in.

Craig Sundberg and Travis Turner were close to even in 1984, with Turner taking over when Sundberg was injured and then Sundberg returning to direct a Sugar Bowl victory.

And, of course, there was considerable debate over whether Brook Berringer or Tommie Frazier deserved to start the 1995 Orange Bowl game against Miami.

Most agreed Frazier was the better quarterback for Nebraska's offense. But that wasn't the issue, really. Those who supported Berringer argued that not only was he talented but he also had earned the right to start the bowl game because he was responsible for getting the Cornhuskers there.

After much deliberation, Osborne decided to start Frazier. But both quarterbacks contributed to the 24-17 victory that provided him with his first national championship. As a result, the starting job was up for grabs, theoretically, the next spring. But everyone knew Berringer was a long-shot.

In most cases, Nebraska's quarterback controversies have been resolved either by a clear-cut advantage in ability or by an injury. In fact, all of the examples listed earlier involved injuries at some point.

"It doesn't matter who's in there," wingback Sean Applegate said of this year's duo.

Kaiser compared them to Arizona quarterbacks Keith Smith and Ortege Jenkins last season. The difference, he said, is that Newcombe and Crouch are more multi-dimensional.

"I think we've got a complete package in both of them," Kaiser said.

That's good, as long as it doesn't become a distraction.

And given the situation after the Iowa game, it's obvious that potential exists. ■



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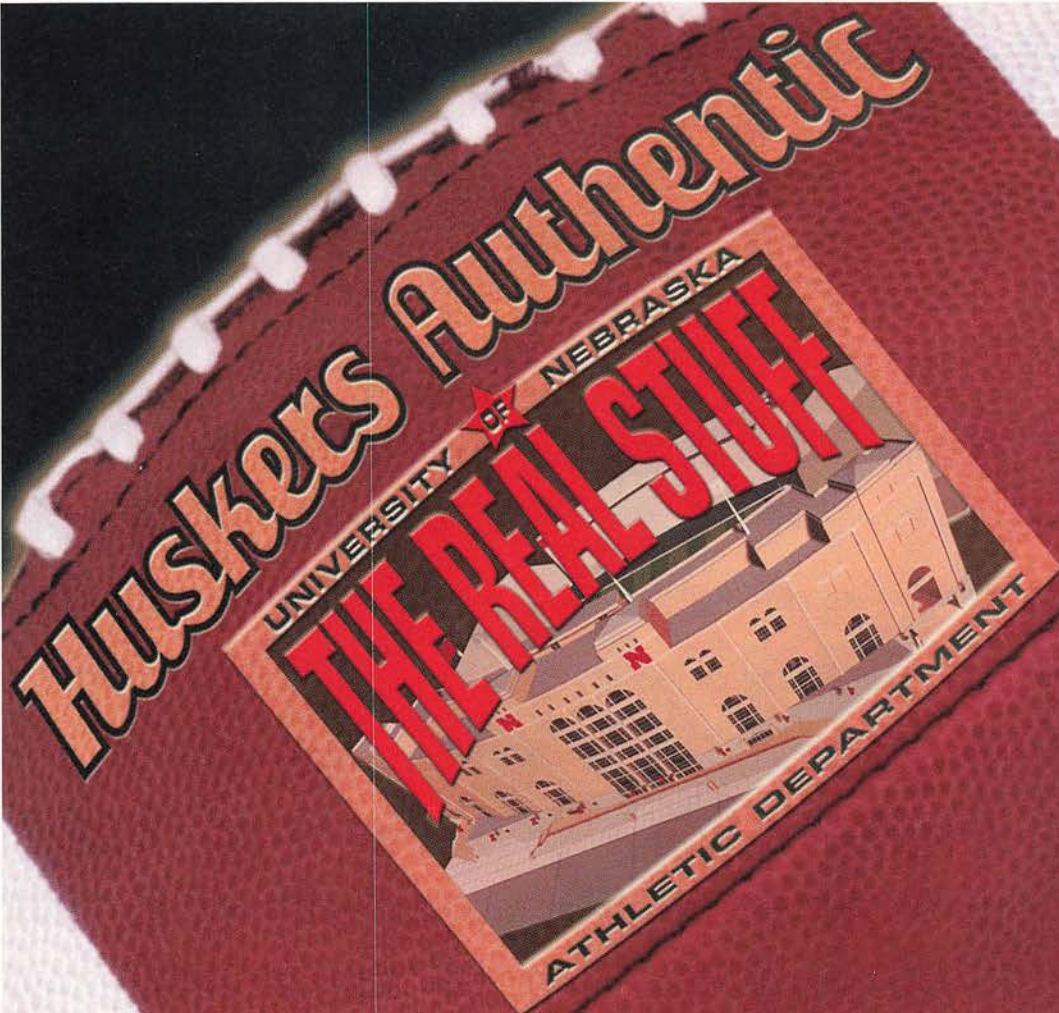


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